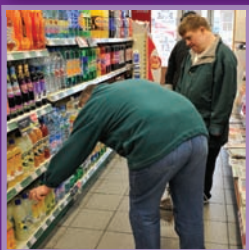


Supporting People

Strategy 2010 - 2015

Housing related support helping vulnerable people to achieve and maintain independent living



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Introduction

We are delighted to present Dudley's new housing related support strategy. Supporting the most vulnerable people to exercise choice and control over their lives remains a key priority for us. This strategy is far reaching and sets out our priorities and objectives for the coming years. Supporting vulnerable people to achieve and maintain independent living is fundamental to creating an inclusive and thriving community. We will be aiming to achieve these priorities at a time when there are increased pressures on resources and reduced public spending. This is why it will be essential to continue working with our regional, cross authority and local partners to ensure that services are high quality, well targeted, co-ordinated and delivering the best value for money.

Housing related support changes lives.....

"I know that if it wasn't for the offer of this flat I would have been back causing trouble and even back in prison mixing with all my old mates, I didn't think anyone would have taken a chance with me after having messed up in the places I have lived before, but being here has made me a better person in myself I have the support to manage things better and know if I need advice or help it's there, I feel independent now and make my own choices, and have my own space, I feel more motivated to keep things up, and want to get things around me and go out to work and get them, I haven't been this positive before.

Having the flat and support has helped me to come off and stay off drugs which has helped with relationships with my family they see me different now and are always there if I need them which wasn't the case before because of me using drugs." MC from Dudley who has received housing related support from one of our services.

Our Vision

Our vision is to 'promote independence through inclusion, equality and support.' This means that we will help people to lead fulfilled and independent lives in homes of their choice.



**Bill Baker (Interim Director of Finance
Chair of the Commissioning Body**



**Linda Sanders
Director – Directorate of
Adult Community & Housing Services**



**Councillor Simms
Lead Member for Housing**

Executive summary

- Dudley is committed to supporting vulnerable people to achieve and maintain independent living. It is fundamental to creating an inclusive and thriving community. We are currently supporting more vulnerable people than when we did our last strategy in 2005.
- In order to ensure that this strategy has maximum impact Dudley will be reviewing its eligibility criteria for housing related support services to ensure that vulnerable people can access the services that they need regardless of the type of (housing) tenure that they live in. A key driver is to increase the provision of floating support (support that is linked to the person and not conditional upon the type of housing that they occupy). This will help to contribute to the transformation of services by providing wider choices for people to decide what type of support they would like to receive.
- This strategy is being implemented at a time when the overall funding levels for housing related support are reducing. This makes it of paramount importance that high quality services are commissioned that deliver value for money and meet the needs of the individual service user.
- There is strong demand for housing related support. This demand exceeds the amount of funding that we have available to commission services. We have developed a series of priority actions and a commissioning priority matrix to guide our future service commissioning.
- There is a need to build some specialist supported housing in order to make sure that some of our most vulnerable people have suitable housing. We will be working with the Homes and Communities Agency and other key partners to ensure that we can deliver this.

Why do we need a strategy?

Providing housing related support and preventing vulnerable people from becoming homeless or being admitted into hospitals, prison or residential care is essential to creating sustainable communities. It is cost effective in saving costs to agencies, for example, health (by reducing admissions to A&E) and is essential in helping vulnerable people to develop the skills they need to exercise choice and control over their own lives. Dudley has a range of strategies that are complementary to and overlap with this strategy but this is the only strategy that concentrates on meeting the needs of a wide range of vulnerable groups. Our last strategy was produced in 2005 and we need a new strategy to respond to the range of support needs and issues that have emerged since then.

Strategic Links

This strategy has been developed by taking on board a range of key strategic drivers and the objectives contained within this strategy contribute to meeting a range of Dudley's strategic objectives. For further details see page 56.

How we will monitor the implementation and effectiveness of this strategy

This strategy contains the vision for how we see services being shaped for the future. In order to deliver this strategy we will produce a commissioning strategy that will tell you how we are going to do this. Where possible we will work with other neighbouring authorities and other partner agencies to jointly commission services where we can achieve better outcomes for service users and better value for money or efficiencies.

In addition to this, services will be regularly reviewed by Service Review Officers who will assess service user satisfaction, cost and quality of services that are being delivered. Services will also be regularly monitored to assess the outcomes that they are achieving. We will look at how effective the organisation has been in supporting service users to meet their support plan objectives and the extent to which they have supported people to acquire independent living skills or maintained their independent living arrangements.

Key messages:

- Since the last strategy in 2005 the overall number of people supported has increased from 5,437 to 8,200. This increase, however, is mainly attributed to the Dudley MBC Community Alarms which aren't solely funded by Supporting People. There has been an increase in the range of services that also attract funding from other sources, particularly older people and learning disabilities from Social Care budgets, and some services also receive a funding contribution from Dudley MBC Children's Services.
- Over time, service providers in Dudley have developed a diverse range of supported housing accommodation that helps to meet the housing needs of vulnerable people. This ranges from specialist housing for young parents to homeless hostel accommodation. The standard of accommodation varies from modern purpose built units to accommodation that was built a number of years ago that no longer meets modern expectations (self contained facilities, Disability Discrimination Act compliant etc) and requires redevelopment/updating.
- The un-ringfencing of the Supporting People Grant (equated to approximately £6.48 million per annum 2009/10) provides opportunities to work more closely with other agencies and funding streams to meet the needs of a wider range of people. This amount however, will be subject to a reduction of around 10% (equivalent to a reduction of £550,000 over the 2010 – 2013 period).
- In order to meet the needs of the wider range of people identified within this strategy there is a need to review the 'eligibility criteria' for housing related support. Currently, there is a concentration of services for people within social rented housing. There is a clear need to balance equality of access to services across all housing tenures. This is particularly important if we are working towards meeting the needs of our increasing population of elderly householders who are equity rich but income poor and often struggle to access support to maintain their independent living arrangements.
- Personalisation of services and choice will become increasingly important over the lifetime of this strategy. To this end, the majority of our services will be changed to 'floating support' in order to ensure that the support follows the person, as they need it, regardless of where they live. The way people access services will also be changed. This will provide people with a wider

range of information about the choices that are available to them. Further work will be done with the Transforming Social Care Team to ensure that housing related support is included in future transformation activities.

- We have identified a range of unmet support needs throughout this strategy. We will use innovation and best practice to try to meet as many of these needs as we can, given the reduction of resources that are likely to be available. We have prioritised the needs into a number of categories. These priorities will be used to form our Commissioning Strategy that will help to deliver the objectives of this strategy.

Key achievements:

Before moving forward, it is important to acknowledge the outcomes that have been achieved from the 2005 strategy:

- **Increased service provision**
Almost all client groups have seen an increase in service provision.
- **Increased the flexibility of services**
This can be demonstrated by the changes in numbers from accommodation based schemes (fixed geographic area and tenure type) which has decreased and an increase in floating support (this means the support follows the client giving them greater choice on housing options, geographical location and level of support). We have 161 less accommodation based schemes and 2,924 more people are receiving floating support, community alarms or outreach services.
- **We have more robust evidence to demonstrate the positive impacts of housing related support**
Service providers now submit data that demonstrates how effective their support has been for service users. The range of data has increased over the last two years. Dudley compares well regionally and nationally in achieving positive outcomes but there is clearly work to be done to improve outcomes in relation to training education and employment. These outcomes also significantly accord with and contribute to meeting our Local Area Agreement targets.
- **Revised the basis for contracting services**
Most services are currently on year 2 of a 3 year Service Level Agreement. Services are being reviewed for effectiveness and are being changed to include elements of combined accommodation and floating support services, and contracted on the basis

of hourly rates to ensure that value for money is being achieved. Some contracts have been combined into a single SLA to acknowledge joint funding arrangements (mainly with Dudley MBC Children's Services).

- **Increased cross border working**

We have found that this has been a slow process but we have successfully procured a cross authority service for people with complex needs/chaotic lifestyles. This has gone live in early 2010. Our partners for this service are Birmingham, Walsall and Wolverhampton. We have learned much from this process and have agreed a further list of potential services that we will work on a cross authority basis to commission.

- **Targeting new services to meet gaps in provision**

The overall increase in service users being supported demonstrates that we have responded to new pressures on services. We have also met some specific gaps in service including chaotic lifestyles/complex needs, development of a foyer scheme, increasing the range of domestic abuse services, Extra Care housing for people with a sensory impairment and increased support for people with learning disabilities and mental health issues.

What we haven't fully achieved:

Further work is required in relation to the following:

- **Providing more move on accommodation**

There is still work to be done on improving successful move-ons, particularly from accommodation based services.

- **Rationalising units/service costs**

There remains a differential in unit costs amongst services within client groups and there are some services with a small number of units. It is felt that improved unit costs and a smaller overall number of contracts per client group would deliver better value for money. This could be achieved by tendering all services by client group over the next 3-5 years. A reduced number of contracts would also improve the capacity of the Supporting People Team Review Officers to concentrate more on continuous improvement activities.

- **Co-ordinating referral and assessment processes**

We acknowledge that this is an area that we need to prioritise within this strategy. Service review activities and client group based service provider meetings are being used to clarify assessment and referral processes. One of our strategic objectives includes the development of a referral gateway in order to make the best possible use of our resources to support vulnerable people. This will also provide more information and choices for people seeking support.

Our priorities for action and the future commissioning of services, and why:

Priority 1 Actions

- **Agreeing and implementing a new eligibility criteria**

This is essential to ensure that people can access the right type and level of support, in their own home, regardless of their housing tenure. Currently services are concentrated on meeting the needs of people who live in the social rented sector.

- **Implementing an electronic referral gateway**

This will help to offer more information and choice to people who are seeking support. It will also help us to more effectively monitor and control referrals, vacancies and the utilisation of services. Once implemented, the gateway will offer us the ability to do proactive service remodelling/commissioning and decommissioning based on up to the minute needs data.

- **Tendering services to ensure that we are getting value for money**

In order to comply with budget pressures we will commence the tendering of services, by client group, starting with mental health services from 2010 onwards. We aim to have completed all client groups by the end of 2013

- **Promoting floating support to personalise support options**

Tenders will predominantly be on the basis of floating support being provided to people in a home of their choice. Accommodation based contracts will be considered if there is a specific need for emergency accommodation such as, for example, domestic abuse refuges. A minimum number of support units will be specified in order to improve value for money.

- **Aligning capital and revenue streams to deliver specific housing options**

We will align funding to successfully deliver a range of new build supported housing projects that have secured Homes and Communities Agency funding and are due to go live within the next 3-5 years. We will also ensure that funding is aligned to meet specific new build supported housing requirements that are needed but have not yet fully secured funding. Schemes

include Extra Care housing, single homeless accommodation, domestic abuse refuges and specialist housing for people with a learning disability.

- **Developing effective service user involvement**

This will ensure that people are receiving the type of support that they want and need to promote their independence and they are involved in the design of services

Priority 2 Actions

- We will implement a series of changes that are low cost but would make a big difference (page 53).

Priority 3 Actions

- We will commission new or additional support services, once annual budget savings have been achieved, subject to the Commissioning Body being confident that the resourcing of these can be sustained based on the priority matrix. See priority matrix on page 54.
- We will consider creating a 'spot purchase' fund in order to purchase housing related support for vulnerable people who are in crisis and may need short term additional support or people who have needs that cannot be met through existing service provision. This support is likely to be of a short term nature that will increase our ability to deliver timely and appropriate, flexible support.

What the needs analysis has told us about each client group

The client groups are discussed in alphabetical order. Please note that each client group has a detailed needs analysis document that will be made available as a separate document and contains the information that shaped these recommendations

Alcohol

It has been recognised that excessive alcohol consumption is a public health concern within the Borough. Currently the only specialist alcohol housing related support is provided via a single homeless hostel. The current service is running at capacity. There is a need to ensure that specialist support can be accessed by all types of households. During a survey of the needs of current service users it was estimated that 163 service users had alcohol misuse issues but only 105 (64%) were receiving support to address their alcohol misuse issues.

Recommendations:

- There is a need to open up access to the current support service to non-hostel residents to enable a wider range of people in need to access the service including women, families, people living in a range of tenures and geographic locations. This must be achieved whilst maintaining a clear referral pathway for hostel residents.
- There is a need to expand the range of specialist alcohol housing related support services to address the growing concerns about alcohol abuse within the Borough. Initially support should be expanded from the current 16 units to a minimum of 30 units and targeted at households that have been identified as at risk of becoming homeless. This support should be provided regardless of household type and tenure.
- Housing related support providers should receive regular training to ensure that they can identify and refer vulnerable people into the appropriate alcohol treatment services and services will be encouraged to participate in future alcohol awareness campaigns as proposed in the draft Alcohol Strategy.

Domestic Abuse

The number of domestic abuse incidents reported to the Police (within the Borough boundary) for Dudley was 4,118 for 2008/09. Dudley has a relatively high rate of reported incidents making Dudley the 16th highest in England (Dudley North) and 10th highest (Dudley South). The actual amount of domestic abuse is likely to be far higher than the number of incidents that are reported to the police. There are three clear domestic abuse hotspots within the Borough. These are Kates Hill, Halesowen North and Lye. The number of reported incidents and repeat victim reports has increased year on year since 2004/5. 14% of victims were male.

Service provision

	2005	2009	Change
Floating Support	26	54	+28
Accommodation based support	26	23	-3
Total	52	77	+25

Despite having increased service provision from 52 units to 77 in 2009, during 2008/09 a considerable number of people were unable to be admitted to services. The majority of these were because there were no vacancies within the (predominantly refuge) services (256 enquiries). Recently a Sanctuary service (security upgrades and support) has been established to provide some households with the option of remaining safely in their home. In addition to capacity issues there is a need to upgrade refuge facilities to provide better accommodation that can meet a wider range of needs.

Recommendations:

- Re-provision of existing Women's Refuge accommodation to provide a hub and satellite service that will provide:
 - Self contained accommodation and space for training, education and therapeutic services
 - Accommodation suitable for men, single women, disabled households, larger family units and be compatible with the needs of Dudley's Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) communities.

- Increase support services by a minimum of 20 units (floating support) to include early intervention to reduce the risk of repeat victimisation in partnership with a security upgrade service. The service must also provide access/support people to access furnished accommodation, where required, and cater for the needs of men, single women and be compatible with the needs of Dudley's BME communities.
- Early review of demand/service provision once additional units have been operational (within 12 months of implementation)
- Continue to fund out of Borough places with BME specialist service provider

New build housing requirements

- Provision of a new build, purpose built , service hub for people requiring accommodation and support who have experienced domestic abuse (minimum of 15 units). The accommodation must be self contained and provide space for training, education and therapeutic services. The accommodation must be suitable for men, single women, disabled households, larger family units and be compatible with the needs of Dudley's BME communities. This new build hub service will be provided as part of a 'hub and satellite' model featuring a range of self contained satellite properties that can consist of new build and/or existing housing (some of which may require refurbishment).

Gypsies and Travellers

Dudley has a long established 18 plot Gypsies and Travellers (Oak Lane) site that is owned and run by the local authority. Turnover on the site is relatively low. There are plans to include an additional 3 plots to meet some of the unmet need but it is estimated that over the next 3-5 years there will be up to 9 new households forming as a result of the sons or daughters that are already living on the site forming households in their own right. The current support worker has also reported that more enquiries are being received for assistance by gypsies and travellers who are living in 'bricks and mortar' within the Borough.

The Black Country Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessment (Fordham Research, July 2008) indicated the need for additional housing from 2008-2018. For Dudley the suggested increase was:

- 51 additional houses
- 21 additional residential pitches
- 6 Travelling showpeople plots

Service provision

	2005	2009	Change
Floating support	18	18	0
Accommodation based support	0	0	0
Total	18	18	0

Recommendations:

- Extend the current support from 18 to 21 units to include 3 additional plots due to become available during 2010
- Extend the remit of the current support service to develop closer links to Dudley MBC Homelessness and Housing Options services so that gypsies and travellers who cannot be accommodated at Oak Lane and are housed in 'bricks and mortar' are identified prior to being offered a social housing tenancy through the Council's Dudley at Home (Choice Based Lettings system)

or obtaining a tenancy in the private sector so that early support can be offered to reduce the risk of tenancy failure and social isolation.

- Commence recording of support provided to gypsies and travellers in 'bricks and mortar' and review after 12 months to assess if there is a requirement for additional support.

New build housing requirements

- Provision of 3 additional plots and improved communal facilities within the boundaries of the existing site
- Consider bidding for funding for additional plots in line with the recommendations made in the Black Country Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessment (Fordham Research, July 2008). The assessment indicated the need for additional housing from 2008-2018. For Dudley the suggested increase was:
 - 51 additional houses
 - 21 additional residential pitches
 - 6 Travelling showpeople plots

HIV (Human Immunodeficiency Virus)

HIV is an infection associated with serious morbidity as it infects and gradually weakens and destroys an infected person's immune system and reduces their protection against infection and cancers. The infection is still frequently regarded as stigmatising and has a prolonged 'silent' period during which it often remains undiagnosed. Highly active antiretroviral therapies have resulted in increased life expectancy for people with HIV. In many circumstances, with early diagnosis and medical interventions living with HIV can be regarded as living with a long term chronic medical condition.

Data from a 2008 UK Health Protection Report indicates that at the end of 2007 over 77,000 people in the UK were living with HIV. 28% were unaware of their infection and 31% were diagnosed late (at a point after which therapy should have begun thus reducing the positive and life prolonging effect of drugs). In 2008/09 180 individuals were diagnosed with HIV in the Dudley Borough. Based on the estimated prevalence rates of HIV, Dudley has the lowest rates of diagnosed HIV compared to other neighbouring authorities. The Health Protection Agency has indicated that an increase in screening and diagnosis will lead to an increase of 'late diagnosis' people being identified who are likely to have health issues that require adapted or specialist housing and a need for housing related support.

In October 2009 an analysis of current service users (104 people) indicated that 37 people were receiving assistance to resolve housing issues. There was not a waiting list for the service. The service provider has provided advice and assistance to other housing related support providers in order to meet the needs of people with HIV who are in other forms of supported housing. This advice and support has proved valuable and something that we would like to continue over the coming years.

Service provision

	2005	2009	Change
Floating support	5	10	+5
Accommodation based support	0	0	0
Total	5	10	+5

Recommendations:

- Commission appropriate crisis support for people with HIV including the provision of easy to access accommodation containing fridge and cooking facilities as required. Given the small numbers involved this will be commissioned as part of a wider crisis support and accommodation package.
- At present there is not a waiting list for the housing related support service, however, an analysis of current service users indicates that around a third (37) have housing issues of some form. The data, however, does not reveal the extent of the housing issue. This could range from making a claim for housing benefit to being roofless. At this stage the recommendation is to continue funding the current 10 units of floating support.
- Commission a series of HIV awareness sessions/promoting good practice sessions to ensure that people with HIV can be appropriately supported in any type of supported housing within the Borough.
- Given the morbidity and mortality associated with HIV we will continue, where possible, to encourage new housing developments to provide homes built to 'lifetime homes' standards in order to accommodate people's needs in later life.

Homeless – People at risk of becoming homeless

The number of people seeking advice from Dudley MBC because they were homeless or felt that they were at risk of becoming homeless has increased over the last seven years. The numbers of people who were assisted and prevented from becoming homeless has increased over the same period of time so less households each year are accepted as homeless and assisted with rehousing.

There is not a visible problem with rough sleeping within the Borough. The last rough sleepers count in 2005 identified 1 rough sleeper. We are aware, however, that there are a number of people within the Borough who are 'sofa surfing' and staying with other households who do not have suitable and sustainable housing arrangements. 21 people who accessed our largest single homeless hostel during 2008/9 indicated that they had slept rough prior to admission. As this is a direct access hostel that is sometimes utilised by people from other local authority areas it is not clear where the rough sleeping took place. We will be working on developing a more strategic approach to maintaining low levels of rough sleeping over the coming years.

There are a number of factors that impact on homelessness, key to this is the availability of good quality, affordable housing. We have evidence that there is a mismatch in the demand for and supply of social rented housing. The global recession has impacted greatly on the ability of a large number of households being able to enter the housing market as first time buyers. For those who do successfully obtain a social rented (local authority) tenancy we have evidence that around 20% of lettings end as a result of tenancy failure. This suggests that people require more support to establish and maintain a tenancy. Anecdotally the cost of setting up a home appears to be the main factor in the tenancy failures so there may be a need for a greater range of furnished lets.

Currently there is a range of specialist supported housing, mainly for single people who have been homeless.

	2005	2009	Change
Floating support	17	0	-17
Accommodation based support	126	102	-24
Outreach/other	0	0	0
Total	143*	102	-41

*NB the 2005 figures included housing related support for teenage parents. This client group is now covered elsewhere in this document.

In addition to the provision already mentioned there are also a range of young peoples' housing schemes that are covered elsewhere in this document (in 'Young people at risk'). It should be noted that the mismatch between the supply and demand for social rented housing for young people aged 18-29 is particularly acute. This age group are particularly likely to need assistance to establish independent living and assistance to acquire the skills that will enable them to maintain their independence.

Households with children who are accepted as being homeless and assisted with re-housing are primarily re-housed within the Council's own housing stock. The households are generally provided with housing related support from the Council's Tenancy Sustainment Team who support 60 households at any one time. There are around 40 households in temporary accommodation (either awaiting a determination on their homelessness claim or who are being assisted to secure suitable accommodation). Many of these are accommodated and supported by other housing related support services such as the domestic abuse refuges. Within the 'households with children category there are a small but significant number of households who have experienced homelessness or are at imminent risk of being evicted from their homes because of anti-social behaviour/anti-social behaviour resulting from poor parenting skills. A Family Intervention Project has been established by Dudley in order to address the needs of these families and to support them to address their issues by offering support to the family unit as a whole. The impact of this intervention will need to be assessed and consideration given in the future to how such services can be sustained once the specific grant funding for the project ceases.

There are a number of housing related support services that historically have been classified as 'generic' services. Some of these services have been included within this section as they generally prevent homelessness or admission into institutions such as hospital or residential care. These services (currently 78 units of floating support) primarily meet the needs of people within social rented housing who are at risk of tenancy failure. As mentioned previously in this section at present it is estimated that around 20% of local authority lettings end in tenancy failure so these services play a vital role in assisting vulnerable people to sustain their tenancies. Given the level of tenancy failures, there appears to be a need to expand the support to help more people and consideration should be given for the provision of more rent deposit/guarantee schemes and furnished lettings to reduce the financial burdens associated with setting up a home/moving into independent living.

Many of the services that we fund to prevent homelessness provide both support and accommodation. Our largest service is an 83 bed hostel for single homeless people. This accommodation is old and in need of updating. In the future we would like to see this provision redeveloped into more modern accommodation where 'foyer style' services are delivered. This would mean that homeless people will get the opportunity to access training, education and employment opportunities whilst they are living in the supported housing scheme.

It should also be noted that a recent assessment indicated that around 40 of the residents that were currently living at the hostel did not have any support needs. Residents often remain in hostel accommodation longer than they actually need to because they are not able to access other types of housing (lack money for a rent deposit to move into the private sector or they do not have enough priority or housing needs to access social rented housing). We are recommending more furnished lettings and the provision of rent deposit/rent guarantee schemes to help people to successfully move on from the hostel accommodation alongside a reduction in the overall number of direct access hostel units that we in the Borough.

Recommendations:

- Ensure that all households who are at risk of becoming homeless are given maximum assistance to prevent homelessness from occurring, or should homelessness occur, they are provided with suitable and accommodation and support that meets their needs. This will be done by making maximum use of all housing tenures and, where possible, offering long term secure housing as opposed to short term accommodation, temporary accommodation or bed and breakfast.
- Continue to provide accommodation with support for the single homeless and childless couples client group but change current provision to include:
 - A reduction in the overall number of units commissioned from 102 to 70 (maximum) single homeless units.
 - Priority of access to services for people with a connection to the Dudley Borough
 - More accommodation for single women
 - Accommodation must be Disability Discrimination Act compliant
 - Consider balancing provision to address a shortfall of accommodation in the north of the Borough
 - All services provided must have the ability to deliver foyer style services within a setting that promotes the development of independent living skills by providing access to training, education and employment, work like activities or social enterprise

- Improve support plan outcomes in relation to managing debt, paid work, training/education and work like activities, mental health, drug and alcohol misuse and reducing self harm
- No shared housing/facilities (unless it is for direct access short term assessment)
- All services to be delivered on a short term basis of less than 6 months

- Decommission any accommodation that does not meet the above criteria and re-commission services accordingly.

- Increase the housing related support for people in temporary accommodation by the equivalent of one support worker post as demand currently exceeds support capacity at 40 households for one worker. This level of demand is anticipated to continue for the next 3 years.

- Retain a 'Crash pad' accommodation based service but extend the remit of the service to include greater preventative working by working with young people who are at risk of being asked to leave the family home. Complete an assessment during 2010/11 to identify the costs associated with providing mediation to the people who are accessing the crash pad service to aid discussions about future funding sources for the mediation service.

- Improve the housing opportunities and choices for 18-25 year olds including specialist housing options advice which offers mediation, rent deposit scheme, life skills training and housing related support upon commencement of tenancy (social rented and private sector tenancies). Given the current high rate of tenancy failures within the social rented sector, provide a minimum of 2 support workers solely to support young people (in any tenure) with a view to reviewing the impact of the service after 12 – 18 months.

- Consideration should also be given to increasing the range of furnished lettings and/or rent deposit/guarantee schemes that are available to reduce the initial costs of setting up a home and thus reducing the risk of tenancy failure because of financial reasons.

- Provide maximum opportunities for early intervention (pre tenancy) for people who have been identified as vulnerable who are actively seeking housing via the Dudley at Home system or who has/is receiving advice or assistance to access housing via the Dudley MBC Homelessness Prevention Services or Housing Options Service.

- Work with multi-agency partners to continue to monitor levels of rough sleeping within the Borough and develop appropriate responses, including the development of voluntary sector outreach services. Levels of rough sleeping are currently low but we will continue to monitor this (including those with no recourse to public funds)
- Work with the Dudley MBC Children's Services managed Family Intervention Project, parenting support services and local housing providers to ensure that evictions for anti-social behaviour are avoided or reduced to an absolute minimum.
- Work with the Dudley MBC Children's Services managed Family Intervention Project and parenting support services to explore long term funding options in advance of the pilot project funding ceasing in 2011.

New build housing requirements

- Provision of supported housing accommodating up to 70 units of foyer style accommodation (preferably with an element of direct access accommodation in order to cater for people with urgent housing needs) whilst also providing the opportunity to access on-site move on accommodation. N.B This overall number may be delivered by one or more development schemes.
- Increase the supply of affordable social rented housing for young people aged 18-25 by provision of either bespoke housing schemes or allocating an appropriate percentage of housing for young people within new housing developments and local lettings plans. (The percentage to vary based on the availability of housing for young people in each locality).

Learning Disabilities

In recent years Dudley has achieved success in helping adults with a learning disability to live at home and reduced numbers of adults have been admitted into residential care. Dudley's (voluntary) Special Needs Register indicated that there were 424 people living with their families that may need assistance to live independently at a later date. This included 276 people aged 18-39 who may benefit from low level housing related support to develop independent living skills and prepare them for independent living.

From the Register we also know that there are 85 people with Autistic Spectrum Conditions. They are predominantly living with their families and may need assistance to live independently. The age breakdown reveals that there is a significant number of people (69) aged between 18-39, some of whom may benefit from low level housing related support to prepare for or achieve independent living.

There will be a growing number of older people with learning disabilities as their life expectancy rates increase. This is largely due to improvements in medical care and more children with complex needs surviving into adulthood.

Service provision

	2005	2009	Change
Floating support	35	78	+43
Accommodation based support	67	66	-1
Total	102	144	+42

Since 2005 the service provision has increased from 102 to 144 units of support. Within this time the number of accommodation based support schemes has reduced slightly (1 unit) but floating support has increased by 43 units. This has helped us to support people with learning disabilities in homes of their choice rather than them having to access specific accommodation in order to receive support. Recent Government policy drivers including 'Valuing People Now' and an increased emphasis on assisting people with Autistic Spectrum Conditions challenges us to provide more innovative and flexible housing options with support for people, particularly those with mild to moderate learning disabilities. In order to achieve this we will be reviewing current service provision and giving priority within any reconfiguration/tender of services to the groups identified in the recommendations below.

Recommendations:

- Review all existing services and provision in consultation with the Dudley MBC Community Team for Learning Disabilities (CTLD) and DACHS Adult Services to refocus provision in order to deliver housing related support for the following priority groups:
 - People with a mild to moderate learning disability that are living with parents or carers who may be unable to continue to provide long term support or care because of their own age and/or infirmity
 - People with a mild to moderate learning disability, especially those aged between 18-39 who are currently living with family/carers
 - Young people with a mild to moderate learning disability who are 'in transition' from Children's to Adult Services within Dudley MBC
 - People with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), especially those aged between 18-39 or those living with parents/carers who may be unable to continue to provide long term support or care because of their own age and/or infirmity
 - The 25 people (at any one time) who are being assisted into supported living by the CTLD Accommodation Team.
- Provide exclusive referral pathways into services for Dudley MBC DACHS Adult Services, Children's Services Transitions Teams and other organisations that work with Dudley MBC to deliver services.
- Include in future commissioning of services facilities for support at night and weekends as many people using existing schemes have active/structured day activities so may need contact with their support worker during evenings/weekends
- Provision of trainer/taster flat(s) (may include reviewing the use of the current flat that has restricted use as it is an upstairs flat and excludes people with mobility needs)
- Working to provide better outcomes for service users in relation to paid work, training and education
- Contribute to the revision and updating of the Learning Disabilities Housing Strategy

New build housing requirements

- Provide 39 new build homes (built to CTLD purpose designed specifications) to enable people currently in residential care to live in local communities through supported living.
- Continue joint working initiatives between strategic housing and CTLD to ensure that specific housing needs are met through new build housing schemes (combination of local authority, housing association and low cost shared ownership).
- All new homes to be built to 'Lifetime Homes' standards to ensure that the housing needs of people with a learning disability can be met by making cost effective changes to housing that will assist them to achieve community based independent living and help them to maintain their independence by undertaking cost effective changes as their health/mobility needs change.

Mental Health

During 2008/09 Dudley and Walsall Mental Health Partnership Trust assisted over 18,000 people to address mental health issues and as at September 2009 879 people were receiving social care for mental health issues. Recent research has suggested that over recent decades welfare support has delivered improvements in meeting physical needs such as somewhere to live, welfare benefits and community safety whilst at the same time the emphasis on attaining material rewards has led to the breakdown of social support networks (family and friends) which can reduce psychological resilience thus leading to increased levels of loneliness and isolation. It is predicted that the impact of the global recession will lead to levels of stress and anxiety doubling. ('Sinking & Swimming – Understanding Britain's Unmet Needs – Young Foundation 2009).

In addition to the need to support people experiencing mental ill health the Primary Care Trust (NHS Dudley) has set out its future commissioning priorities which include a number of priorities that will require an element of housing related support in order to ensure that these priorities are achieved. This includes moving care closer to the home rather than being delivered in clinical settings, more individual and personalised services and ensuring that people can exercise choice and control over housing and support options.

Service provision

	2005	2009	Change
Floating support	53	110	+57
Accommodation based support	59	58	-1
Outreach/other	5	62*	+57*
Total	117	230	+113

Since 2005 the range of housing related support for people with mental health issues has increased from 117 to 230. This does, however, include a 50 unit outreach service for people with physical disabilities to improve their mental well-being by accessing alternative services to traditional day centre services. The accommodation based support scheme units has reduced by 1 unit but there has been an increase in floating support by 57 additional units. For 2010 this has reduced to 45 units as a 12 unit floating support scheme ceased part way through 2009/10. Following the production of the needs analysis concern has been raised regarding the lack of throughput for service users, particularly in accommodation based services and this lack of throughput has

resulted in some services ceasing to keep waiting lists for potential service users. The use of shared housing has also highlighted instances where people requiring support were unable to access schemes because of the gender mix/risks associated with shared housing.

Recommendations

- Remodel or tender the service provision for this group to achieve the following outcomes*:
 - Reduced differentiation in unit costs and an overall reduction in the number of contracts to improve value for money/efficiency savings
 - Provide floating support as opposed to accommodation based services except in exceptional circumstances where short term accommodation may be required, for example, for people requiring discharge from hospital
 - Increased diversification of support – to provide support based on a range of high, medium and low support needs in order to improve the support provided to higher risk/more needy service users and providing service users with the opportunity to receive more or less support depending upon their needs and mental health at any point in time, including the facility to receive extra support as early intervention when their mental health is starting to deteriorate
 - Increased move on from support services into independent living by changing all contracts from ‘long term’ (over two years support) to ‘short term (up to two years support). NB where a longer ‘maintenance’ level of support is required this will be negotiated on an individual basis, based on support needs.
 - Improving the chances of successful move on by offering ‘step down’ floating support for people moving out of current accommodation based services into community based floating support. This will be undertaken by their current support provider in order to keep continuity of support whilst they move into a home of their choice
 - Remove the use of shared housing as this does not contribute to personalisation/individualisation of choice
 - Provide a short term re-ablement service for people being discharged from hospital (combination of providing housing related support whilst they are an in-patient in order to sustain/maintain their current home and avoid becoming homeless, home support following discharge, or supporting people to access furnished accommodation with support for people who have been made homeless)
 - Improve the support provided to access relevant training, education and work related activities (increase employability skills) by providing flexible learning activities

*This will involve a review of the needs of those currently receiving support

- Retain the outreach service for people with a physical disability but consider the possibility of widening the service to other service user groups.
- Improve working with health professionals and the housing options service to ensure that maximum effort is made to sustain tenancies or living arrangements whilst people are in hospital to reduce the risk of homelessness and reduce delayed hospital discharges
- Improve working with Dudley NHS, Dudley and Walsall Mental Health Partnership Trust to ensure that care pathways include joint working with the appropriate housing/housing related support services to sustain/maintain the patient's current housing or source suitable alternative housing and/or support through joint commissioning.
- Improve working with health professionals to ensure that people receiving housing related support can access appropriate mental health services and/or make best use of self-help support, for example, access to psychological therapies for anxiety and depression.

Offenders – people at risk of offending (including young offenders)

This section covers offenders, young offenders and ex-offenders. During 2007/08 570 aged 18+ residents from the Dudley Borough were received into UK prisons. Between 2007 and 2013 the prison population for England and Wales is predicted to increase by over 18,000 people. Dudley has a good track record in assisting offenders to have settled and suitable accommodation. In addition to this a new service has recently come into operation that will meet the needs of people with more complex needs and chaotic behaviour. This should help to further increase support for people with chaotic behaviour that are also often known to the criminal justice services as a result of their behaviour. In addition to this one existing supported housing scheme that primarily houses ex-offenders is working towards becoming an accredited foyer (accommodation linked with the provision of training, education and/or employment).

Service provision

	2005	2009	Change
Floating support	3	20	+17
Accommodation based support	26	22	-4
Total	29	42	+13

Since 2005 the number of housing related support units for offenders aged 18+ has increased from 29 to 42. The accommodation based support scheme units has reduced by 4 unit but there has been an increase in floating support by 17 units.

Dudley also has a good track record of providing accommodation and support for young offenders and has been recognised nationally as delivering good practice by the Youth Justice Board. During 2008/9 96.4% (402) young people completing community interventions or on release from the secure estate had access to stable accommodation. At the local level the overall number of offenders is not predicted to change dramatically but there is an expectation that new holistic community based rehabilitation orders (Youth Rehabilitation Orders) that include a housing needs assessment will mean that less young people are admitted into custody.

Service provision

	2005	2009	Change
Floating support	0	20	+20
Accommodation based support	12	0	-12
Total	12	20	+8

Since 2005 the number of housing related support units for young offenders has increased from 12 to 20. The accommodation based support scheme units has reduced by 12 units but there has been an increase in floating support by 20 units.

Recommendations (offenders aged 18+):

- Maintain the existing level of 20-25 units to primarily meet the needs of offenders being released from prison who are at risk of homelessness or to provide suitable accommodation from which a community based sentence can be completed to avoid a custodial sentence.
- Increase floating support by an additional 10 units
- Develop and implement a rent guarantee scheme, as a minimum linked to the additional 10 units that is designed to serve the wider needs of offenders including providing improved move on from existing schemes, catering for the needs of women and offenders from the Black and Minority Ethnic communities and the needs of offenders with partners/families.
- Continue to work with the Regional Offender Manager to ensure that maximum assistance is provided to people when they are admitted into custody to maintain their accommodation where possible or to ensure that people's homes are not repossessed because of accruing debts. If it is not possible to maintain their accommodation during the duration of their time in custody early pre-release planning must be undertaken to ensure that they can access suitable housing and support upon their release.

- In addition to these new recommendations ensure that:
 - Foyer services are fully implemented and accredited within an existing support scheme (to deliver improved outcomes in relation to training, education and employment) and then evaluated after 12 months of becoming operational
 - A cross authority complex needs/chaotic behaviour service that has already been commissioned becomes operational and is then evaluated after 12 months of becoming operational
 - Performance in relation to PSA 16 targets and outcomes are monitored and reviewed at least annually

Recommendations (young offenders under 18):

- Increase the current number of floating support units by 2
- Increase the capacity to provide early mediation/homelessness prevention with parents/families at the point when an offence has been detected and charges have been made as this is often the point at which family conflict/homelessness occurs by developing better links with the council's mediation service and providing contract flexibility for the housing related support service providers to support young people to remain within the parental/family home.
- Improve housing related support in relation to accessing and participating in training, education or employment especially for those who are or have been NEET (Not in Employment, Education or Training)
- Develop and implement a rent deposit/guarantee scheme for young offenders who have reached the age of 18 and are ready to move on to other housing options to increase the number of planned and positive moves.

Older People (aged 65+)

1 in 5 children born today can expect to live to celebrate their 100th Birthday. Over the coming years there will be greater increases in the number of older person households than other household types. Over time the housing expectations and aspirations of older people have changed and more people are seeking to maintain their independent living arrangements for longer. This can be achieved by providing timely support to assist people when they need it and to make sure that there is appropriate telecare equipment, adaptations and suitable housing. There will also be an increase in the number of Black and Minority Ethnic households containing older people who may require specialist support.

It is estimated that around half of older people have one major health problem and around a quarter will have three or more. Dudley is particularly keen to improve its performance in relation to reducing the number of delayed discharges from hospital and successfully rehabilitating older people who are leaving hospital so that they can return home within three months of their hospital discharge date. Maintaining the choice and independence of older people is a key strategic driver.

In order to provide more flexible housing related support options for the older people in the Borough we will be looking to provide timely support to the person, wherever they live rather than making them move into specific accommodation in order to receive the support. The support services will also become more time limited (depending upon support need) so that more people can receive the help when they need it rather than the support being provided over a long period of time regardless of whether they need it or not. Any changes will be implemented sensitively in order to ensure that people who became tenants or residents of supported housing schemes with the expectation that, for example, a warden service would be provided, are continued to be supported appropriately in line with recent legal rulings (Barnet).

The development of Extra Care housing (housing where care and support is provided as an integrated service in schemes that usually have a range of on-site facilities such as gym, health facilities and social/leisure activities) has commenced in Dudley. One Extra Care scheme primarily for people with a sensory impairment has opened and by 2015 a further five general needs Extra Care schemes will be in operation.

Service provision

	2005	2009	Change
Floating support	643	1038	+395
Accommodation based support	871	760	-111
Community Alarms	2934	5103*	+2169
Other/outreach	300	347**	+47
Total	4748	7248	+2500

*This includes Dudley MBC community alarms and the sheltered housing service. It should be noted that the alarms and services provided are funded through a number of funding streams, primarily the Housing Revenue Account, with some funding also coming from private sector income and Supporting People funding.

**For the purposes of this strategy two other services that have previously been termed as 'generic' services (in the 2005 Strategy) that clearly contribute to maintaining the independence of older people have been included within the service provision data. These are the Home Safety/Home Improvement Agency service which provides advice and assistance for, primarily, older people to address their housing issues by providing advice on housing options and advice on a range of financial options that can be accessed in order to carry out physical changes to the home, including grant and loan assistance. There are also a small number of leaseholders who receive some contribution from housing related support funding. This is usually a contribution towards community alarms costs and is subject to an assessment of their financial circumstances.

Since 2005 the number of housing related support units for older people has increased from 4,748 to 7,248. The 7,248 figure includes Dudley MBC Community alarms that are funded through a range of funding streams, as stated above. The accommodation based support scheme units has reduced by 111 units but there has been an increase in floating support, community outreach services and community alarm (responses) by 2,611 units.

Recommendations:

- Tender services and/or renegotiate existing accommodation based services to enhance the range of flexible housing related support options that are available to older people. Tender specifications to give consideration to including the following: providing community based multi-tenure floating support to older people within the locality and providing opportunities for local older people to access scheme based activities.
- Tender services and/or renegotiate existing contracts to provide short term (time limited) housing related support that will help older people, when they need it, to maintain their independence for longer. This will mean that older people's housing related support will no longer be classed as 'long term' services. There will be an initial expectation that the support will be provided on a more intense basis in situations where older people are at risk of being admitted to hospital or residential care or they have just been discharged from hospital and the support will be reduced and stopped if their health and circumstances improve. All support plans and levels of support will be reviewed regularly. This support should primarily be delivered within the older person's own home or be part of a short term recovery package for people who are placed in alternative accommodation pending adaptations/waiting for more suitable accommodation to be sourced.
- Stipulate within any tendering or renegotiation of older people's housing related support services that telecare and telemedicine assessments (if appropriate) must be completed and actioned on all new service users and due regard given to the role of telecare/telemedicine technology when determining the level of housing related support that is required.
- Continue with the reconfiguration plans for extending community based floating support for Dudley's Black and Minority Ethnic Communities and review following 12 months of implementation to assess the requirement for additional support and/or consideration of specifically designed BME elder accommodation.
- Provide housing related support to approximately 500 older people within 5 Extra Care Housing Schemes (to be built between 2010 and 2015).
- Consider using any savings made as a result of contract tendering/negotiation on providing a handyperson/small repairs service to complement those run by the Dudley MBC Home Safety Partnership.

- Work with drug and alcohol services to improve support plan outcomes in relation to meeting unmet drug and alcohol misuse issues.
- Work with Dudley NHS and Dudley and Walsall Mental Health Partnership Trust to improve support plan outcomes in relation to meeting mental health needs.

New build housing requirements

- Provision of 5 purpose built Extra Care housing schemes for older people by 2015.
- All new homes to be built to 'Lifetime Homes' standards to ensure that the housing needs of future generations of older people can be met by making cost effective changes to their existing homes that will assist them to maintain their independence.
- Evaluate the requirement for specialist supported housing or extra care schemes to meet the needs of the Black and Minority Ethnic communities. This will be further informed by evaluation work from the 5 general needs extra care schemes, the extra care scheme for people with a sensory impairment and the Council's review of its sheltered housing accommodation and services.

Physical and Sensory Disabilities

Within Dudley over 58,000 people have been identified as having a limiting long term illness. Of these, just under 26,000 are of working age (aged 18-64). This indicates that over half of the people are aged 65+. This inevitably means that some older people with physical and sensory disabilities will be receiving housing related support within the 'older peoples' housing related support services. Demand for services in the future is likely to increase because of:

- increased life expectancy (as people become older they are more likely to become less mobile and develop sensory impairments (hearing/sight loss)).
- Improved medical care has also increased the life expectancy for people who were born with a physical or sensory impairment.

At the moment there are few housing related support services that are specifically for people with physical and sensory impairments. This is largely as a result of the services that were inherited when the Supporting People funding arrangements came into existence.

Service provision

	2005	2009	Change
Floating support	20	116	+96
Accommodation based support	27	0	-27
Total	47	116	+69

Since 2005 there has been an increase of 69 housing related support units. The services are now provided on a floating support/hourly based support contract. Currently 71 people (plus a community outreach service) are supported by the Beacon Centre Extra Care housing scheme and 45 units of floating support is delivered to assist people with lower levels of disability. Key service provision gaps have been identified during consultation with the Dudley MBC Physical and Sensory Disability Team. These include:

- Short term support for people aged 55+ who are struggling to maintain their independent living because of sight and/or hearing loss
- Sighted guides/guide communicators to enable people to access mainstream services such as housing

- Housing related support for young parents who have physical or sensory disabilities.

Recommendations:

- Continue to fund floating housing related support services for older people requiring extra care housing who have a sensory impairment (subject to satisfactory service reviews)
- Continue to fund the housing related support service provided for people with a physical disability requiring short term support (subject to a review of current referral pathways to ensure that key stakeholders can make appropriate referrals and satisfactory service reviews)
- Commission all future services with an emphasis on providing floating support in order to meet the future housing with support aspirations of people who can use self directed support to achieve and maintain independent living
- Continue to maintain a register of adapted social housing (local authority and housing association) that can be reused by people with a physical/sensory disability as they become vacant
- Continue to include consideration of telecare/telemedicine and other IT solutions within all support needs assessment for this client group
- Provide a targeted short term service to meet the needs of older people aged 55+ who are struggling to live independently because they have experienced a deterioration in their sight and/or hearing (usually age related deterioration) to enable them to maintain independent living.
- Provide a Sighted Guide and Guide Communicator service to enable people to access mainstream services access supported housing schemes as appropriate or assist them to maintain their independent living. This service will be provided on an ad hoc basis for service users based on their fluctuating needs.

- Provide low level housing related support to young parents who have physical or sensory disabilities themselves, learning disabilities and/or have children with disabilities. This includes providing specific support to older children (approaching Year 11 onwards who do not yet live independently in order to develop their independent living skills).
- Continue to provide specialist tailored support in order to make sure that people with physical or sensory disabilities are not disadvantaged in any way by using the 'Dudley at Home' system to access social housing

New build housing requirements

- Build lifetime homes within the Borough – this includes working with the Strategic Housing Team to design and build homes to meet the specific needs of people with physical and sensory disabilities that cannot be met through the existing supply of housing in the Borough.

Refugees

The number of refugees receiving support from the housing related support service has remained static over the last couple of years and averages out at around 57 households receiving support at any point in time.

Changes to the national immigration system have meant that fewer asylum seekers are being dispersed to the Borough. Speedier immigration decisions, at the point of application, for asylum seekers (via the New Asylum Model) has meant that fewer people are being dispersed nationwide whilst a decision is made. For Dudley these changes have meant that through their NASS contract (National Asylum Support Service - The NASS contract is between the Home Office and Dudley MBC, as part of a West Midlands Consortium of Local Authorities to provide furnished accommodation and support to people awaiting a decision on their asylum application) the Asylum Seekers Team is currently supporting 29 single people and 55 families (containing 211 adults and children) compared to 33 singles and 105 families (396 adults and children) in March 2007. Recently there has been an increased emphasis by the Home Office on settling the older asylum claims (called legacy cases).

For all claims made after March 2007 the Home Office has commissioned local refugee support services (for people given asylum or permission to stay in the UK). Once an asylum seeker becomes a refugee and is given permission to stay they are automatically referred to the Refugee Integration and Employment Service (RIES). For Dudley residents this means that they are referred for support to the RIES team based in Wolverhampton. This means that Dudley only needs to assist the people given leave to remain whose claim was made before March 2007.

The Refugee Support Service, are therefore, primarily meeting the needs of a decreasing number of people who are referred to as legacy cases. The team estimate that there are up to 15 people who fall within this category within Dudley MBC accommodation and around the same again within the private rented sector in Dudley (precise figures have been requested from the Home Office but have not yet been supplied). These legacy cases are not eligible to access the RIES service. The 57 refugee households currently being supported (as at 27.1.10) originate from 19 different countries worldwide.

Specialist data:

Service provision

	2005	2009	Change
Floating support	19	30	+11
Accommodation based support	0	0	
Total	19	30	+11

In addition to the floating support service the team operates a 'drop in' support service which is accessed by visiting or telephoning the team at 15/17 St James's Road in Dudley.

Recommendations:

- Widen the remit of the existing Team (2 full time support workers) to continue to provide support to refugees who are ineligible for RIES assistance until the remainder of Dudley's 'legacy' asylum claims have been processed (this is likely to be completed by the end of 2011) and include support for refugees who have settled in private rented housing in the Borough who have intermittent short term needs.

Commence additional work to widen the remit of the service to include support to other vulnerable private rented sector tenants who may be at risk of eviction, illegal eviction or harassment from their landlords. Work to include the development of a rent deposit scheme that will contribute to enabling vulnerable people and people given leave to remain in the UK wider options to access the private rented sector in Dudley. The team will also play a role in liaison with migrant and EU accession country workers to identify issues where they are housed in poor quality and overcrowded conditions within the private rented sector. The long term aim being to refocus this service to meet the wider needs of all types of vulnerable households within the private rented sector.

Substance Misuse

Information from Dudley's Drug and Alcohol Action Team (DAAT) indicates that locally Dudley has one of the lowest rates of Problem Drug Users (PDUs). PDUs are people for whom drug use has begun to pose, or has already introduced a more chaotic lifestyle for themselves, their family and friends or to their community. Over recent years the number of estimated PDUs has reduced by 4%. Most of the PDUs describe heroin as their first drug of choice. The numbers of PDUs within the treatment services is relatively stable and there are less young adults entering treatment services who are using crack or opiates (drugs that are most likely to trigger acquisitive crime activities).

In terms of general data about offenders, there are distinct peak age ranges depending on the type of drugs used:

- Cannabis – peak age for cannabis offences is between 18-23 (65% of offenders), Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) offenders accounted for 28% (18% Asian)
- Heroin – Offenders were generally aged between mid 20s to early 30s, BME offenders accounted for 14% (9% Asian)
- Cocaine - peak age for cocaine offences is between 19-21 (53% of offenders), unlike the other two categories there were more female offenders recorded (17%)

Needs data that has been gathered indicates that there are a number of vulnerable people within housing related support schemes that are either receiving assistance to address their substance misuse issues or are showing signs of a substance misuse issue but they have not yet asked for support to address their issues.

Of the people who left a short term housing related support service (service duration of less than 2 years - this is an exit survey done at the point of leaving the service):

- 184 people had identified a support need in relation to substance misuse
- 103 people (56%) had received support to better manage their substance misuse. This compares to 57% for the West Midlands and 58% for England.

There were 8 people in long term services (over 2 years duration) who required assistance with substance misuse and 75% had received support to better manage their substance misuse issues. This smaller number in long term services is likely to be because the data is based on a sample survey of service users rather than everyone who left the service and the long term services tend to predominantly meet the needs of older people and people with learning disabilities.

During August/September 2009 a survey was undertaken with all supported housing service providers. The survey asked support workers to identify people currently in their services who have identified/disclosed a support need and those people that they are supporting that appear to have a substance misuse issue but have not yet disclosed it or asked for support in addressing their need:

- 135 service users were identified as having a substance misuse need
- 95 (70%) were currently being supported to address the need.
- 55 had a drugs and alcohol (poly) need

Overall, this data suggests that increased joint working with the drugs treatment service providers is required to address the unmet needs. Proactive work has commenced by one of the treatment service providers to improve support to people who are already within supported housing services.

National data from the British Crime Survey (Drug Misuse Declared: Findings from the 2008/09 British Crime Survey, England and Wales – Home Office Statistical Bulletin) indicates that the use of an illicit drug statistics has shown a slight decrease since 1996 and has remained stable since 2007/08. Last year, however, more people reported that they had used a Class A drug in the last year. During the last year increased use of cocaine powder, ecstasy, tranquillisers, anabolic steroids and ketamine were reported,

Recommendations:

- Provision of two housing related support workers with a specialist knowledge of how best to support people who have issues in relation to substance misuse. This support needs to be available to people of all housing tenures and have close working arrangements with local drugs treatment services.
- The specialist workers will directly support vulnerable people and also have a remit to work with local drugs treatment services to provide training and awareness raising to other housing related support providers and co-ordinate activities with the treatment services to increase take up of services and specific initiatives such as harm reduction, blood borne viruses and needle exchange.

- There is a need for additional support/outreach services and crisis intervention from the drugs treatment services for people with substance misuse issues who are living within supported housing (especially the services for homeless people, young people and the domestic abuse support services)

Teenage Parents

A range of multi-agency working is taking place to reduce the number of teenage conceptions for females aged under 18 within the Borough. This work has resulted in a reduction of conceptions over a number of years. The caseload of the Respect Yourself Campaign Team (formerly the Teenage Pregnancy Unit) has remained relatively static over recent years with them supporting around 120 young parents at any given time.

Service provision

	2005	2009	Change
Floating support	17	17	0
Accommodation based support	0	9	+9
Total	17	26	+9

Since 2005 we have increased the support for teenage parents by 9 units. An analysis of the current waiting list for support and the number of young parents who are living in overcrowded conditions and being supported by the Connexions specialist advisors, however, suggests that there is a need to expand service provision. During the course of the data gathering it has become apparent that some of the young parents living in the overcrowded conditions have not registered to use 'Dudley at Home' the choice based letting system that they need to use to look for social rented housing. Assistance is being provided to assist teenage parents or pregnant young women to bid for properties that will enable them to stay close to support networks.

The Respect Yourself Team identified the need to accommodate some young parents at very short notice as there were a small number of young parents requiring assistance on an emergency basis. This usually occurred following the birth of the child and the young parent returning to the family home. Subsequent clashes of parenting styles, overcrowding and the crying of the baby, sometimes leads to the young parent being asked to leave the family home

The availability of a rent deposit/rent guarantee scheme would assist more young parents to access private rented accommodation in their local areas as many are currently unable to access furnished accommodation in their local areas.

During September 2009 the Government also pledged to provide housing with support to all 16 and 17 year olds including teenage parents who cannot stay with their family.

Recommendations:

- Increase floating support services to teenage parents by a minimum of 15 units to cover current demand (waiting list/social housing applicants) and then review once further information is available about the 2012 housing/support pledge made for young people by the current Government
- Any new or re-tenders of floating support to include:
 - Flexibility to meet medium and low support needs
 - Evening and weekend cover as required
 - Early intervention support to include supporting pregnant young women within the family home to assess their housing options and apply for housing/set up a home prior to the birth of the child if they cannot live within the family home on a long term basis
 - Providing on-going support, as required, to teenage parents who have a second child at an early age
- Develop a clear pathway to meet crisis housing needs (either negotiating use of current crash pad housing or other alternatives)

Young People at risk of becoming homeless

During the 2008/09 financial year 56 16 to 17 year olds approached the homeless services for assistance, of whom, 3 were accepted as homeless and in priority need. This low number masks the full extent of the assistance and interventions that are undertaken with young people to prevent them from becoming homeless. Negotiation with parents/relatives, mediation and the use of 'Crash Pads' (which is short term furnished accommodation that is provided to give 'breathing space' to young people and their parents in order for them to reflect on why their relationship has deteriorated/broken down) are all utilised. In the main, by providing advice, assistance and mediation in partnership with the Directorate of Children's Services many young people are assisted to avoid becoming homeless.

There were also a considerable number of requests for assistance from 18 to 25 year olds. Indeed, over a third of the overall homelessness enquiries came from this age range. As a result of this, the proportion of people aged under 25 accepted as homeless and in priority need increased by 30% in 2008/9. This trend appears to be older children of households who cannot afford to access the housing market in their own right because they are unable to buy, struggle to access social rented housing because of the overall demand for social housing or they cannot access the private rented sector because they lack the funds for a rent deposit and rent up front. There is also a significant number within this cohort who have experienced a violent relationship breakdown.

In terms of housing related support there are two strands that can be employed to prevent homelessness and the risk of becoming more vulnerable:

The first strand is to provide additional support/mediation to young people to make it possible to remain living with parents/relatives (except where it is unreasonable to do so, for example, in households where they are at risk of violence/abuse) and work with them to build up independent living skills (budgeting, cooking, employability skills) in order to maintain their current living conditions until an opportunity to successfully move into independence occurs. This is a vital support option in the current climate as the recession has impacted severely on the housing options of young people.

The second strand of support is concentrated on the young people, for whom it would not be safe or reasonable for them to continue living within the parental home or where they are at risk of violence from relationship breakdown. There are currently a

range of supported housing schemes that fulfil this role. Given the large number of enquiries from this age group it would appear that there is scope to expand housing choices and support for this group.

There is an on-going mismatch between supply and demand within social rented housing (primarily local authority stock). An analysis of people registered for social housing (via Dudley at Home – Dudley MBC housing waiting list) identified that the mismatch of currently available properties (vacancies over a 12 month period) compared to people on the waiting list for housing was particularly acute for young single people (up to age 29) with only 75 vacancies occurring whilst there were 758 people on the waiting list. This suggests that 90% of people within this category will not be able to access social rented housing during that 12 month period. The shortfall reduces to 72% for couples and single people aged 30+ with 1977 people registered but only 563 vacancies arising in the 12 month period. The shortfall then reduces dramatically, although at just under 30% is still significant, for older people 811 people and 574 vacancies and families/others 3034 applicants and 835 vacancies.

(Data source: Select Committee on the Environment Report – Review of the Housing Allocation System 5.3.09)

In addition to this we know from analysing data that we hold on local authority social rented housing that young people who are able to access accommodation struggle to maintain independent living. Anecdotally, it appears that the cost of running a home appears to be one of the biggest barriers for young people who subsequently give up their home and return to their family/lodge with others on an insecure basis. This suggests that there may be a need for more furnished lettings in order to reduce the initial costs of setting up a home. Over the two year period (1.4.07 to 31.3.09) 169 out of 228 (74%) tenancies that ended for 18-25 year olds appeared to result in young people moving to housing options with less security of tenure/opportunities for independent living. Most tenancies lasted less than 12 months. In order to give an indication of the impact of tenancy failure, the council creates just over 2,000 new tenancies per year. During the period that covers the 169 tenancy failures 4,158 new tenancies were created (NB this covers all age ranges of tenants).

During September 2009 the Government also pledged to provide housing with support to all 16 and 17 year olds including teenage parents who cannot stay with their family.

Service provision

	2005	2009	Change
Floating support	12	55*	+43
Accommodation based support	29	20	-9
Total	41	75	+34

* Includes 20 units of floating support specifically for young offenders (see further details in the section on people at risk of offending)

Within the current services on offer there is a range of different types of accommodation and support including accommodation based schemes, a foyer and 'crash pad' emergency accommodation. Young people also have access to other specialist housing and housing related support including services for young offenders and teenage parents. In some circumstances they also access other general homeless services including the single homeless direct access hostel.

Care Leavers

Currently, the needs of young people leaving care are met by providing 23 units of (floating) housing related support. In addition to this some of the general young persons housing related support schemes are also utilised.

The 16+ Team currently have an agreement with Dudley MBC (DACHS) to use up to 10 local authority properties (16+ Team is the tenancy holder). Currently they are using 9 of the flats with one due to come on line imminently. 1 flat is being used as a trainer/emergency overnight flat. 1 emergency bed is utilised within another supported housing scheme. This has been utilised extensively over the past 12 months.

Data on how the accommodation needs of care leavers is being met (PSA 16 – National Indicator 147) for 2008/09 demonstrates that 33 out of 37 care leavers were housed in suitable accommodation. The provision of an additional 5 - 10 properties for the use of the 16+ Team/care leavers (commencing with 5 additional units and increasing up to 10 within the next 3 years) would further improve our ability to meet the needs of this client group. These properties could consist of privately rented, local authority or housing association tenancies.

Recommendations:

- Continue to provide foyer style services for young people in order to provide holistic support and contribute to tackling worklessness and ensure that any future service commissioning includes a requirement for foyer style services in the future.
- Retain a 'Crash pad' accommodation based service but extend the remit of the service to include greater preventative working by working with young people who are at risk of being asked to leave the family home. Complete an assessment during 2010/11 to identify the costs associated with providing mediation to the people who are accessing the crash pad service to aid discussions about future funding sources for the mediation service.
- Improve the housing opportunities and choices for 18-25 year olds including specialist housing options advice which offers mediation, rent deposit scheme, life skills training and housing related support upon commencement of tenancy or pre-tenancy (social rented and private sector tenancies). Given the current high rate of tenancy failures within the social rented sector, provide a minimum of 2 support workers solely to support young people (in any tenure) with a view to reviewing the impact of the service after 12 – 18 months.
- Consideration should also be given to increasing the range of furnished lettings that are available amongst all tenures to reduce the initial costs of setting up a home and thus reducing the risk of tenancy failure because of financial reasons.

Care Leavers

- There is a need to increase the number of properties that are made available to the 16+ Team (current agreement is up to 10 local authority properties). During 2009/10 this needs to be increased by 5 units with an option to increase by a further 5 between 2010 to 2012. There is a need to expand the floating support service to accommodate these increases.
- No specialist new build accommodation required as client group can be accommodated within general needs housing. In the future there may be a need to access housing built to lifetime homes standard to accommodate looked after children with disabilities making the transition to adulthood. This can be met through accessing newly built housing association properties (as from 2011 all housing association homes will be built to lifetime homes standards).

New build housing requirements

- Increase the supply of affordable social rented housing for young people aged 18-25 by provision of either bespoke housing schemes or allocating an appropriate percentage of housing for young people within new housing developments and local lettings plans. (The percentage to vary based on the availability of housing for young people in each locality).

Summary of new build supported housing schemes that have secured funding from the Homes and Communities Agency:

- 2 Extra Care Housing Schemes
- 31 local authority new build homes to meet special needs (primarily people with learning disabilities).

New build supported housing that requires funding from the Homes and Communities Agency during the lifetime of this strategy:

- 3 Extra Care Housing Schemes
- Domestic abuse - Provision of a new build, purpose built, service hub for people requiring accommodation and support who have experienced domestic abuse (minimum of 15 units). The accommodation must be self contained and provide space for training, education and therapeutic services. The accommodation must be suitable for men, single women, disabled households, larger family units and be compatible with the needs of Dudley's BME communities. This new build hub service will be provided as part of a 'hub and satellite' model featuring a range of self contained satellite properties that can consist of new build and/or existing housing (some of which may require refurbishment).
- Consider bidding for funding for additional plots in line with the recommendations made in the Black Country Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessment.
- Provision of supported housing accommodating up to 70 units of foyer style accommodation (preferably with an element of direct access accommodation in order to cater for people with urgent housing needs) whilst also providing the opportunity to access on-site move on accommodation. N.B This overall number may be delivered by one or more development schemes.
- Increase the supply of affordable social rented housing for young people aged 18-25 by provision of either bespoke housing schemes or allocating an appropriate percentage of housing for young people within new housing developments and local lettings plans.

Potential future supported housing schemes that may require funding from the Homes and Communities Agency during the lifetime of this strategy:

- Housing that is specifically designed and built for households with specific housing needs that cannot be met by using standard housing stock
- Extra Care Housing Schemes (Black and Minority Ethnic communities)
- Cluster properties – properties that may be built as part of a larger housing development that will provide a small number of homes in close proximity with the possible inclusion of a communal area/communal spaces that can be utilised in order to provide shared care/shared support or shared social activities

- Housing to meet the needs of young people and teenage parents in line with the Governments pledge (September 2009) to provide housing with support to all 16 and 17 year olds including teenage parents who cannot stay with their family.
- Funding to assist with remodelling or retro-fitting existing supported housing to ensure that it meets current and future needs. This could be to improve the housing to meet current expectations and needs of a particular client group, or carrying out work to buildings that can no longer meet the needs of the current client group but could be converted into successful supported housing for other vulnerable people.
- We will consider any new innovative initiatives that may emerge during the lifetime of this strategy that will assist vulnerable people to become home owners or increase their opportunities to sustain independent living in homes of their choice.

Appendices

Priority 2 - Changes that are low cost but would make a big difference

Client Group	Key issue	Recommendations	Potential impact on resources
Floating Support	Many people currently have to access accommodation based schemes in order to receive the support that they need. This stifles housing choices.	Provide more services on a floating support basis with the exception of services where people have an urgent need for accommodation	Potentially this could save money as accommodation related costs would clearly be disaggregated from current service costs.
Leaving Care/16+	There is a shortfall of around 5 units of supported accommodation. The provision of this additional resource will have a substantial impact on driving up PSA16 performance.	Increase number of properties for use by 5 and seek to provide additional support within existing service level agreements.	Would require the use of 5 additional social rented properties. Seek to provide the additional support within existing service level agreements.
Young Offenders	Around 5-10 young offenders are referred for housing assistance per month. The expansion of the current scheme by 2 properties and increased links to mediation services/rent deposit schemes would meet the shortfall. The provision of this additional resource will have a positive impact on improving on the already high levels of performance that are being achieved (Youth Justice Board performance indicator)	Increase the number of social rented properties for use by 2 and support within existing support arrangements.	Would require the use of 2 additional social rented properties. Seek to provide the additional support within existing service level agreements.
Gypsies and travellers	Three additional pitches are being provided at the Oak Lane site and gypsies and travellers living in 'bricks and mortar' are also increasingly being assisted by the current housing related support service	Extend the existing support by 3 additional units and extend assistance to people living in 'bricks and mortar'	Would require some additional funding to fully reflect the costs of the current service and increased remit.

Prioritisation Matrix

This is an indicative guide of our commissioning priorities (as at March 2010) that will be used to expand service provision or create new services. These priorities will be addressed once the relevant financial savings have been achieved. We also recognise that these may change over the duration of this strategy and there may also be opportunities that arise for joint working or other circumstances that may occur that we may wish to pursue that do not fall in line with these priority ratings so we reserve the right to be flexible about our commissioning intentions.

Client group	LAA priority	Current demand exceeds need	Projected demographic changes	Opportunity for joint commissioning /funding	Low cost but high impact	Current service in existence	Funding commitment required to secure HCA new build funding	Score	Priority for commissioning
Alcohol	10	5	10	0	0	0*	0	25	3
Domestic abuse	0	10	10	10	0	0	10	40	1
Gypsies and travellers	0	10	10	0	0	0	10	30	2
HIV	0	0	10	10	0	0	0	20	4
Homelessness	0	10	10	0	0	0	10	30	2
Learning Disabilities	0	0	10	10	0	0	10	30	2
Mental Health	0	0	10	10	0	0	0	20	4
Offenders	10	5	10	0	0	0	0	25	3
Older People	10	10	10	10	0	0	10	50	1
Physical/Sensory	0	10	10	10	0	0	0	30	2
Refugees	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Substance misuse (drugs)	0	10	0	10	0	0*	0	20	4
Teenage parents	0	10	5	10	0	0	0	25	3
Young People	0	10	5	10	0	0	0	25	3

*Service currently provided within other housing related support services rather than as a specialist service

Scoring rationale

LAA priority (based on 31.3.09 agreed targets) Yes = 10, No = 0

Current demand exceeds need 10 = 20+ more than current provision, 5 = 10 more than current provision, 0 = demand can be met through maintaining existing provision

Projected demographic changes Increase = 10, Static = 5, Decrease = 0

Opportunity for joint commissioning/funding (Primarily within the Borough funding streams but would consider cross authority too) Yes = 10, No = 0

Low cost but high impact Yes = 10, No = 0

Current service in existence Yes = 0, No = 5

Funding commitment required to secure HCA new build funding Yes = 10, No = 0

Needs analysis data

A detailed needs analysis has been produced for each client group that is mentioned within this strategy. These are available via the Dudley MBC website www.dudley.gov.uk (Sheltered and supported housing).

Equalities Issues

An Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA) has been produced in relation to the development of this strategy. As this is a wide ranging strategy that covers a number of vulnerable groups who may have different equalities issues, there is a dedicated section within the needs analysis (documents that are available in addition to this strategy) for each group that specifically identifies the issues.

Strategic links:

Dudley Community Strategy Review 2010-2013

Dudley Local Area Agreement submissions (31.3.09)

Dudley's Joint Strategic Needs Analysis

Dudley MBC Housing Strategy 2007-2010

Dudley MBC Homelessness Strategy Refresh February 2009

Strategy for Older People

'Fit for the Future – Homes for Life' Dudley's Housing Strategy for Older People 2009

Dudley Borough Strategy for People with Physical and Sensory Disabilities 2008-2010

Director of Public Health Annual Report 2007 (09 Lifestyles)

Domestic Abuse Strategy

Black Country Gypsy and Traveller Needs Assessment – July 2008

Youth Offending Service Management Board Report

Dudley Adult Mental Health Joint Commissioning Strategy 2010-13 (draft)

Dudley Drug and Alcohol Action Team (DAAT) Needs Assessment 2009/10 (draft)

Dudley Children and Young Peoples' plan 2008/11 Dudley Children's Trust

Independence and Opportunity – Our Strategy for Supporting People – CLG June 2007

The Supporting People Programme Thirteenth Report of Session 2008-09 – House of Commons, November 2009

Research into the financial benefits of the Supporting People Programme - Tom Ashton and Claire Hempenstall, Capgemini, CLG July 2009

Current supply by primary client group

This is a summary of the services funded through Dudley Supporting People arrangements and a comparison of how they have changed since our 2005 Five Year Strategy was published.

Client group	2005					As at June 2009						Comments
	Accommodation based	Floating support	Community alarms	Oth	Total	Accommodation based	Floating support	Community alarms	Oth	Total	Change (No.)	
Older People	871	643	2934	300	4748	760	1038	5103	347	7248	+2500	Includes Dudley Community Alarms (HRA/SP joint funding)
Learning disabilities	67	35			102	66	78			144	+42	
Physical or sensory disability	27	20			47	20	75			95	+48	
Mental Health	59	53		5	117	58	110		*62	230	+113	*Outreach
Substance Misuse	*132	*5			*137					0	0	* All of these units were also counted in other categories
Offenders or at risk of offending	26	3			29	22	20			42	+13	Excludes Young Offenders provision
Single homeless/ Rough sleepers	120	0			120	102				102	-18	
Young	29	12			41	20	55			75	+34	Includes Young

Client group	2005					As at June 2009						Comments
	Accommodation based	Floating support	Community alarms	Oth	Total	Accommodation based	Floating support	Community alarms	Oth	Total	Change (No.)	
People/ Leaving Care												Offenders provision
Homeless Families and Teenage Parents	6	17			23		26			26	+3	
Women at risk of domestic violence	26	26			52	23	54			77	+25	
HIV/AIDS		5			5		10			10	+5	
Refugees		19			19		30			30	+11	
Travellers		18			18		18			18	0	
Other	26	90			116	25	78	0	0	103	-13	2009 Leaseholders and home safety included in older people section (in 2005 included in 'other')
Total	1257	941	2934	305	5437	1096	1592	5103	409	8200	+2763	

Changes to funding amounts by client group

Client group	2005	2009	Change
Older People	2,068,858	1,245,055.58	-823,802.42
Learning disabilities	1,006,275	1,580,837.14	+574,562.14
Physical or sensory disability	66,495	76,430.90	+9,935.90
Mental Health	1,010,697	1,241,726.39	+231,029.39
Substance Misuse	0	0	0
Offenders or at risk of offending	285,268	268,531.90	-16,736.10
Single homeless/Rough sleepers	711,683	644,151.17	-67,531.83
Young People/Leaving Care	125,164	295,483.73	+170,319.73
Homeless Families and Teenage Parents	126,700	102,624.86	-24,075.14
Women at risk of domestic violence	361,162	478,345.87	+117,183.87
People with HIV/AIDS	38,359	40,590.94	+2,231.94
Refugees	52,363	55,410.81	+3,047.81
Travellers	11,169	8,632.60	-2,536.40
Other:	521,515	525,145.60	+3,630.60
TOTAL	6,385,708.	6,562,967.49	+177,259.49

Who we have consulted during the development of this strategy and examples of how they have shaped the strategic objectives

A copy of the draft strategy has been made available for people to provide feedback/comments on via the Dudley MBC Community Engagement Database (www.dudley.gov.uk)

Learning Disabilities – Housing Strategy Sub-group, Learning Disability Partnership Board (multi-agency) – includes carers and service users

Mental Health – Mental Health Housing Forum, Mental Health Board (multi-agency) – includes carers and service users

Substance Misuse Implementation Group (multi-agency)

Domestic Abuse Co-ordinator

Physical and Sensory Disability Team

Homelessness Review Group (multi-agency) – includes Dudley MBC Children’s Services, CAB, Drug Treatment Services, Youth Offending Service

Supporting People Providers Forum

Dudley Council for Voluntary Service – includes carers and service users

Age UK Dudley

West Midlands Probation Service

Dudley Housing Partnership (multi-agency) – includes Directorate of the Urban Environment and housing associations

Aquarius

Dudley MBC – Directorate of Adult, Community and Housing Services - Directorate Management Team

Examples of some of the changes that have been made as a result of the consultation process:

Changes made
Clarified within the document that this forms part of Dudley’s Joint Strategic Needs Assessment
We have increased the number of units in the ‘New build requirement section’ - ‘foyer style’ accommodation for homeless people from 54 – ‘up to 70’. This number aligns better with the overall number of units we would like to have in the future (NB this overall number may be achieved by creating a number of schemes as opposed to one scheme)
Domestic abuse - Floating support and accommodation figures were transposed in table (2009) column – now corrected

Changes made
Teenage parents - Service provision table amended - no overall increase but 9 accommodation based units included within overall figure in 'accommodation' column to clarify that one contract covers floating and accommodation based support
Paragraph inserted to reflect the role that specialist built supported housing has played in meeting the needs of vulnerable people in the Borough
Clarification that accommodation based support may be included in future tendering arrangements but the overriding intention to expand floating support remains
Clarification on reducing overall number of support contracts rather than on reducing the number of support service providers – value for money
Expand detail to clarify that people receiving short term (time limited) support services may need a low level longer term 'maintenance' level of support in order to maintain independent living
Older People – service supply data recalculated based on current actual activity
Adding 'remodelling' or 'retro-fit' options to the 'Potential future supported housing schemes that may require funding from the Homes and Communities Agency during the lifetime of this strategy' list in order to source possible future funding for specialist schemes that need upgrading

