



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

# The Supporting People Programme *in* Wales

## - Factsheet

May 2013

[www.cymru.gov.uk](http://www.cymru.gov.uk)

## Background

- The Welsh Government invests over £136 million in the Supporting People Programme annually.
- It supports more than 50,000 people each year to live as independently as they can. The programme aims to prevent problems by providing help as early as possible.
- Of those helped by the programme, a significant proportion are older people. However, it also supports people fleeing domestic violence, people at risk from homelessness or getting over a period of homelessness, as well as people with mental health needs or substance misuse needs or a learning disability.

## Aims

The aims of the Programme are:

- Helping vulnerable people live as independently as possible.
- Providing people with the help they need to live in their own homes, hostels, sheltered housing or in other specialist housing.
- Preventing problems or providing help as early as possible in order to reduce demand on other services such as health and social services.
- Providing housing related support to complement the personal or medical care that some people need.
- Putting people at the heart of the programme.
- Ensuring high quality services, which are delivered as efficiently and effectively as possible through joint working between organisations that plan and fund services and those that provide services
- Providing support based on need.
- Promoting equality and reducing inequalities.



## How are people supported?

- Support is focused on building individuals' independence and helping them to develop the skills needed to live independently.
- The programme does not provide personal or health care but may complement the support provided by health, social care or criminal justice services.
- Support workers will often provide advice on managing personal budgets, maintaining support networks, managing relationships with neighbours. People can also be signposted to other services such as specialist housing and financial advice, care or treatment services.

## What are the benefits?

- A stable situation for a home or other form of accommodation makes it easier for individuals or households to maintain contact with other statutory agencies and for agencies to maintain contact with them.
- Homelessness, or a lack of stable accommodation, is strongly associated with poor health. For some it can lead to offending behaviour which increases the burden on agencies.
- The programme helps to build more sustainable communities and can reduce demands on statutory services such as health, social services and criminal justice services. It benefits the person receiving the support and the general public.
- Services aim to prevent problems from happening in the first place. If involved at an early stage they can also help prevent problems from getting worse.
- Supporting people services help reduce many people's need for emergency or 'blue light' services, particularly those who are older.

## Making a difference

Andrew had been experiencing mental health problems for 10 years. He had repeated admissions to hospital. He would regularly fall behind on his medication and use street drugs and alcohol to self medicate. His behaviour would become erratic falling behind on his rent and losing his accommodation. As a result his community psychiatric nurse would not be able to maintain contact. His life would become increasingly chaotic and he would return to hospital, frequently following an appearance in court. Following a referral to a tenancy support team, Andrew received help from a support worker who helped him manage his household budget and provide him with emotional support as well as reminding him to take his prescribed medication. With support and regular contact, his use of street drugs reduced as did his offending behaviour. As a result of his support funded through Supporting People, Andrew can now manage his own home and keeps up with his outpatient appointments.



Sandra has two children. She has been in and out of abusive relationships for a number of years. Following periods of abuse, her relationships break up. However, she has on a number of occasions returned to abusive partners. This cycle has led to Sandra losing contact with her sister and brother who provided support with caring for her children. Her difficulties have also resulted in alcohol use to help her cope. The children's attendance at school has been erratic and when in school, their behaviour was problematic. They have also had to move school on a number of occasions as the family have left their housing.

In January, Sandra moved into a refuge with her children. With support, she began to manage her use of alcohol and regain her self esteem. The refuge workers helped her re-establish links with her family and gain a place in a temporary supported housing project where she received parenting support and assistance with finding a tenancy with a local housing association. By the end of the year, she was exploring opportunities to enter into an information technology training project.

## How are services commissioned?

- Services are planned through multi agency Regional Collaborative Committees. By bringing together the people commissioning, delivering and using services as equal partners and pooling their knowledge and expertise, better services can be delivered.
- Regional Collaborative Committees make recommendations to the Welsh Government on spending in their areas. These are informed by information provided by individual local authorities. They are advisory only.
- The Committees help services make the most effective use of the funding available.
- There are six Regional Collaborative Committees across Wales:
  1. **The Vale & Cardiff** – *The area of Vale of Glamorgan and Cardiff Local Authorities*
  2. **Gwent** – *The area of Blaenau Gwent, Newport, Torfaen, Caerphilly and Monmouthshire Local Authorities*
  3. **Mid & West** – *The area of Powys, Pembrokeshire, Ceredigion and Carmarthenshire Local Authorities*
  4. **Western Bay** – *The area of Swansea, Neath Port Talbot and Bridgend Local Authorities*
  5. **Cwm Taf** – *The area of Rhondda Cynnon Taff and Merthyr Tydfil Local Authorities*
  6. **North Wales** – *The area of Anglesey, Wrexham, Conwy, Denbighshire, Gwynedd and Flintshire Local Authorities*
- Each Committee is made up of representatives from local authorities, health, the probation service, Supporting People service providers, and landlords. They are also working to ensure that service users views are represented.



- The Committees are responsible for producing Regional Commissioning Plans for services which takes account of local priorities and identifies the most effective way to meet local needs. It is this document that forms the basis for the recommendations to Welsh Government.

## Supporting People National Advisory Board

- The Supporting People National Advisory Board provides advice to the Minister for Housing, Regeneration and Heritage. Its purpose is to ensure that the Supporting People Programme is focused on meeting the housing-related needs of vulnerable people.
- The Board aims to provide strong leadership, a clear strategic direction and a well defined programme.
- The Board meets four times a year. In addition, Members of the Board meet regularly with the Regional Collaborative Committees.
- More information on the Board can be found on the Supporting People web pages of the Welsh Government website. Please see links for both under 'Further Information' below.

## Further Information

Further, more detailed information can be sourced from:

- **The Supporting People Programme Guidance**  
<http://wales.gov.uk/topics/housingandcommunity/housing/publications/sppguide/?jsessionid=A2E24673F7F1722F09E046E849CB0C78?lang=en>
- **Supporting People Welsh Government Web Pages**  
<http://wales.gov.uk/topics/housingandcommunity/housing/supportingpeople/?jsessionid=A77AEB226320D75E2A5BACC38B2D99DB?lang=en>
- **Contact - Supported Housing, Homelessness and Revenue Grants Team, Housing Policy Division**  
[SupportingPeople@wales.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:SupportingPeople@wales.gsi.gov.uk)

