



Barnet Supporting People Commissioning Board

5-Year Supporting People Strategy 2005-2010

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FOREWORD

The aim of our Supporting People strategy is to ensure that vulnerable people in Barnet have the best possible support services. Supporting People is crucial to the health, well-being and cohesion of Barnet's community. We are always mindful that behind every statistic is an individual or family in need. We will continue to drive through the changes that are needed to achieve excellent services that are valued by the people who use them

This document clearly sets out our priorities and objectives and how we will deliver them. It has been agreed by the three Supporting People partners, Barnet Council, Barnet Primary Care Trust and London Probation.

We intend that the strategy should be a living document. It will need to develop flexibly in response to Barnet's 2005 Supporting People Needs Survey and to new models of service commissioning and delivery. Expected changes to the way in which Supporting People funding is allocated by government from 2006-2007 will present key opportunities which Barnet is keen to grasp

The Supporting People partnership thanks the many organisations and people who have worked hard to develop this strategy and who will work even harder in the years ahead to continue to improve and deliver it.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This Supporting People strategy explains Barnet's plans for supported housing services for the borough's vulnerable residents. It has been developed by Barnet's Supporting People Commissioning Board, representing the borough's statutory social services, health, housing and community safety agencies.

There are nearly 150 support services provided by 60 different organisations, including housing associations, charities, private companies and local authority services. Supporting People contributes over £7M annually to pay for these services, and this strategy sets out Barnet's objectives and priorities for how this money will be spent in the years ahead

Our plans cover services for many different kinds of vulnerability, including older people needing help to stay safe and warm, young people leaving care to set up home for the first time, and people with illnesses and disabilities that can present barriers to independent living. Our aim is to provide the best possible services - services that make a difference to the lives of vulnerable people,

Supporting People Priorities

Supporting People services have a vital part to play in creating a borough in which everyone prospers, in which vulnerable people can lead safe, healthy and independent lives. Our intention is to ensure that Supporting People services work together with all the agencies that contribute to achieve this goal. The strategy aims to align Supporting People objectives with wider strategies to tackle homelessness, ill-health and social exclusion

Providing homes and successful communities of choice - Our new plans focus on homelessness prevention, helping people at risk of eviction to maintain their tenancies and keep their homes, as well as providing locally-based support to vulnerable people living in Barnet's most deprived areas linking Supporting People to wider homelessness and estate regeneration strategies.

Making Barnet the safest Borough in London - our strategy aims to make an impact on crime and the fear of crime. Priorities include more support for women at risk of domestic violence who choose to stay at home as well as new Refuge services; well-supervised supported accommodation for young people most at risk; and realistic housing and support options to help drive drug misusing offenders out of crime and into treatment

Ensuring accessible and responsive health and social care services in all our communities - using Supporting People services to help prevent dependence and unnecessary admission to hospital and residential care. Our plans cover some of the borough's most vulnerable residents, including extra care sheltered housing for older people, supported housing for people with learning disabilities and mental illness, and floating support available wherever people are living for people able to live more independently

Supporting People Needs and Resources

Our strategy responds to Barnet's Supporting People Needs Survey completed by independent consultants in March 2005 and covering over 2,700 vulnerable people. The Survey shows substantial unmet needs, including almost 40% of older people in need but receiving no support; only half of those with learning disabilities in touch with services; and almost one quarter of domestic violence presentations involving repeat victimisation.

The current level of Supporting People funding received by Barnet from the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister is equivalent to less than 50p per head of population, only 60% of the national average. Barnet's Supporting People services consequently supports a lower proportion of the borough's vulnerable residents, just 72% of the London average, and 90% of the outer London average.

Re-focusing Supporting People

Barnet welcomes the government's intention to reform the present funding arrangements to recognise the level of unmet need but our strategy also aims to ensure that we maximise the value of existing investment. During 2003/4 and 2004/5, our service review and performance monitoring programme has generated over £1.3M in savings, almost 10% of the value of the programme in April 2003, enabling Barnet to meet the DCLG's savings targets and expand the range of new and innovative services, including

- Support for homeless families involved with statutory child protection services
- Outreach support for the borough's Chinese community, London's largest
- New cross-tenure floating support for older people
- Crisis house support for mentally ill people at risk of breakdown in the community

We know that some of Barnet's Supporting People services are long-established, reflect historic priorities and do not necessarily deliver the kinds of support that are most needed. We will continue to re-model existing services so that they can deliver support as flexibly as possible, using floating support models that deliver task-based help where and when it is needed. We aim to limit accommodation based services, where support is provided to a particular block or building, in order to ensure it is used to provide high support to the most vulnerable.

Mainstreaming Supporting People

Our strategy sets out an ambitious service development programme and we know that it is essential to review the structures and processes that are needed to deliver it effectively. We plan to:

- mainstream Supporting People investment, integrating it with the wider programmes of the key statutory agencies responsible for statutory housing, health, social care and community safety provision in Barnet
- modernise joint commissioning processes, ensuring that Supporting People services contribute to shared strategic priorities and goals

- work with the north London sub-region and London government to explore options for cross-boundary service provision and efficient procurement

Above all, Barnet recognises that the strategy is a working document. The national pace of change since the launch of Supporting People in 2003 offers new and challenging opportunities which must inform our local strategy. We know that we have much more to learn from the growing evidence of outcome data showing what works best, from the plans and experience of national pilot projects and programmes in other areas, and above all from service users themselves about what they most value.

BARNET SUPPORTING PEOPLE STRATEGY

1 INTRODUCTION

The national Supporting People programme came into effect on 1.4.03, creating key changes in the governance, financing and administration of supported housing services for vulnerable people. This introduction to Barnet's Supporting People Strategy explains the background to the programme and the changes that occurred two years ago.

Supporting People Grant

The first key change was the introduction of an annual Supporting People Grant allocated by government to local authorities to pay for supported housing services. The new Grant replaced several national legacy funding streams. It is used to pay for the staffing costs of support services, not the bricks-and-mortar costs of the buildings where service users are living which must be met from rents or from other funding sources

Barnet's Supporting People Grant is used to fund a very wide range of services, for example, services based in specialist housing such as sheltered housing for older people, womens refuges and hostels for homeless people. It also pays for a range of services providing floating support in the community wherever vulnerable people are living.

Supporting People Administration

The second key change made local authorities accountable for the administration of Supporting People Grant and the local programmes in each area. In April 2003, some 150 supported housing services in Barnet were provided by 65 separate public, private and voluntary sector organisations, delivering support to almost 3000 service users. These services are now funded by Supporting People Grant and operate under contracts with Barnet Council.

The amount of Supporting People Grant which government allocates to Barnet represents the value of the funding which these services were receiving in 2002/3. There are wide variations in the levels of funding received by local authorities, reflecting historic differences in the volume and value of services operating in each area. The government plans to reform this situation through a needs-based national Distribution Formula currently being developed

Supporting People Strategy

The third key change was the creation of local Supporting People Commissioning Partnerships, including Health, Probation and Local Authority representatives, responsible for deciding the local strategy and investment priorities in each area.

This Strategy sets out the objectives and priorities of Barnet's Supporting People Commissioning Partnership for the next five years, and summarises the main directions for development of the local programme. It describes progress in remodelling the existing

framework of services inherited in 2003 as well as the partnership's plans for investment in new services.

In line with the intentions of the national changes in 2003, Barnet's intends to ensure that local Supporting People services deliver quality, value for money, and as effective a contribution as possible to the objectives and targets of Barnet's Community Plan

2 DEVELOPING THE STRATEGY

The Need for a Strategy

Barnet is the fastest growing outer London borough with a population of 314,564. It is a borough of contrasts with areas of wealth and deprivation within a short walk of each other, and where homelessness and dependence can prevent people from being part of their community and sharing in its activities and opportunities. Our challenge is to create a borough in which everybody prospers, in which vulnerable people can lead safe, healthy and independent lives.

Barnet First Class, the borough's Community Plan sets the goals for meeting this challenge, feeding into detailed strategies and action plans of all the partners responsible for achieving our vision. The Supporting People programme is a key contributor and our 5-Year Strategy aims to ensure excellent services for everyone in need – especially for the most vulnerable in our community. We want preventative services that:

- help vulnerable people to take control over their own lives, building life skills and knowledge of responsibilities and risks, and improving life chances
- deliver flexible support when it is needed and wherever people are living, whether in temporary accommodation, private rented housing, social housing or owner-occupation
- provide safe well-supervised settings for the most vulnerable groups, helping individuals to move on to greater independence and providing continuing support for those at most risk

During 2004/5, we carried out a detailed analysis of the need for Supporting People services in Barnet, complementing our programme to review all existing services. We have redrawn the objectives set out in the 2002 Shadow Supporting People Strategy to ensure that our programme is aligned with Barnet's overarching strategies concerned with Housing, Health Social Care and Community Safety. Our revised priorities will help to make sure that we target resources where they will make the biggest difference.

- working with Health and Social Services to provide safe supported housing alternatives to hospital and residential care
- working with Housing and Homelessness Services to tackle repeat homelessness and provide sustainable housing solutions
- working with Probation and community safety agencies to reduce re-offending, drugs misuse and anti-social behaviour

Our 5-Year Strategy is a living document. It has to develop and respond to changes over time, not just in Barnet but as part of London-wide Supporting People planning. Above all it must reflect the views and aspirations of vulnerable people who use Supporting People services and the organisations that provide them. We will continue to consult all our partners about the Strategy in order to produce an updated delivery plan each year

Planning the Strategy

This 5-Year Strategy has been approved by the Supporting People Commissioning Board and by Barnet Council. It represents the outcome of consultation and dialogue with statutory commissioners, service providers and service users, as well as many other stakeholders.

The Strategic Planning Structure

Barnet has a robust structure of multi-agency groups which bring key partners together to develop the borough's core strategies and oversee their delivery. This 5-Year Supporting People strategy draws on the work of all these groups, reflecting the diversity of Supporting People service users and the cross-cutting objectives of Supporting People service

- Barnet's *Health and Care Partnership Board* and *Safer Communities Board* are responsible for setting the overall strategic vision, targets and framework of local services for vulnerable people.
- The two Boards lead a range of *satellite Boards* and *specialist planning groups*, each responsible for detailed service development and investment programmes for individual primary need groups
- The *Supporting People Commissioning Board* operates as part of this structure. Representing London Probation, Barnet Primary Care Trust and the council's Housing and Community Care Services, the Board provides specific leadership for Barnet's Supporting People strategy and investment plan.
- Barnet Council as the Supporting People administering authority is tasked with ensuring that the Supporting People strategy reflects the views of all statutory partners, other stakeholders and of vulnerable people and that it delivers quality and value for money. During 2005, the council's *Overview and Scrutiny Committee* responsible to the council's *Cabinet* will complete its review of the Supporting People programme in order to inform the continuous improvement of this 5-Year Strategy, and will oversee the planning and delivery of each Supporting People Annual Plan
- The 5-Year Strategy is further shaped by service providers through the *Supporting People Providers Forum*. The newly-created Sheltered Housing Providers Forum, representing almost half of Barnet's Supporting People service organisations will provide specific focus for the 2005/6 strategic review of this sector

During 2005/6, the Supporting People Commissioning Board will review Supporting People strategic governance, including its own functions and the need for a separate Core Strategy Group, as part of its plans for mainstreaming the programme described in Section XX

Empowering Service Users

Service users must drive this 5-Year Strategy both in defining preferred models for new services and in shaping improvements to existing services.

Service user involvement and participation in Supporting People takes many forms in Barnet including:

- Involvement through the strategic planning structure described above, with service user and carer representation on Boards and planning groups, ensuring that users' knowledge and experience carries weight at the heart of the strategy
- Participation in service management jointly with service providers, helping to shape service delivery so it is responsive to needs and preferences and informing models for new service development
- Employing user-led voluntary groups to carry out consultation on key strategic projects, building capacity for long-term partnership in service improvement
- Direct consultation with vulnerable people currently lacking access to Supporting People services, driving the independence agenda for groups most at risk
- Consultation through the Supporting People service review programme, helping the Supporting People Commissioning Board to hear how users rate the services they receive and the activities they most value

Barnet recognises that empowering vulnerable people and their representatives is critical to a successful strategy and delivery programme. We plan to create a consistent framework that enables all service users to have their say, using the best practices identified through our review of existing participation methods in Supporting People services

3 THE VISION FOR SUPPORTING PEOPLE IN BARNET

Barnet's Supporting People Programme will improve the opportunities of vulnerable people to achieve and sustain safe, healthy lifestyles. Our services will provide high quality and responsive support that removes barriers to independence and builds a caring and cohesive community for all.

Services will be:

- Based on prevention and tackle the causes of dependency and exclusion
- Available at the right time and in the right place
- Centred on the individual needs of each service user
- Integrated with other housing, social care and community safety services
- Focused on quality, making sure that people get the best possible support
- Delivered by a well-motivated, skilled and empowered workforce
- Effective, evidence-based and value for money
- Innovative and creative based on the best models of support

Our Values - Barnet's Supporting People programme and each individual service will:

- Put the service user at the heart of everything we do
- Create choice for service users and respect their decisions
- Be accountable for performance and the use of the financial resources
- Respond to the diversity of vulnerable people and the community
- Reflect the views of service users in the way they are run
- Finally, strive to make a difference to the lives of vulnerable people in Barnet

4 KEY THEMES FOR THE SUPPORTING PEOPLE STRATEGY

Our Key Themes aim to align the Supporting People programme as closely as possible with the priorities of Barnet's Community Plan and the objectives of our strategic partners.

Providing homes and successful communities of choice - our 5-Year Strategy builds on the framework of homelessness support services for people created over the past five years to help people moving into temporary accommodation and resettling into social housing. Our new plans focus on:

- Homelessness prevention, helping people keep their homes through support to manage their tenancy responsibilities successfully
- Realistic housing options as an alternative to temporary accommodation and for single homeless people who do not have enough priority for rehousing
- Delivering support to Barnet's most deprived areas by providing support linked to our regeneration programme, covering the borough's four major housing estates
- Working with our regional partners to ensure that Supporting People is part of London's major plans for building new homes and creating sustainable new communities

Making Barnet the safest Borough in London - our 5-Year Strategy aims to create support services that play a full part in making an impact on crime and the fear of crime:

- Delivering security and support for women at risk of domestic violence who choose to stay at home
- Working with Barnet's Youth Offending Team to provide well-supervised supported accommodation for young people most at risk
- Providing housing related support alongside throughcare and aftercare programmes to direct drug misusing offenders out of crime and into treatment
- Providing housing related support to offenders and those at risk of offending in order to reduce re-offending and anti-social behaviour
- Develop appropriate safe housing related solutions for offenders supervised under Barnet's Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA)

Ensuring accessible and responsive health and social care services in all our communities - our 5-Year Strategy puts Supporting People at the heart of Barnet's programmes to reduce institutional living and dependence for the borough's most vulnerable residents:

- Extra care sheltered housing, providing integrated support and care in purpose-built lifetime homes to help older people to stay independent for as long as possible
- Barnet's Learning Disability Modernisation programme, responding to residents' aspirations and choices by providing modern supported housing as an alternative to residential care
- Delivering high support step down housing for people in the Care Programme Approach, including homely Crisis House support to prevent hospital admission
- Providing Telecare and task-based visiting support, helping to manage risks and build confidence for vulnerable older people who choose to stay in their own homes

PROVIDING HOMES AND SUCCESSFUL COMMUNITIES OF CHOICE

Homelessness and Housing Need

Homelessness in Barnet is part of the wider crisis in London where over 40,000 homeless households now live in temporary accommodation, a population that has almost doubled during the past ten years. With 1700 homeless households living in temporary accommodation, Barnet is now one of only ten boroughs in the country (nearly all of them concentrated in north and west London) where annual homelessness acceptances exceeds total social housing supply.

For some, homelessness is simply a result of housing shortage. For many others, it is the product of a complex pattern of problems and difficulties in their lives. All six boroughs in the North London partnership recognise the need to provide support that tackles the causes of homelessness and which helps the existing homeless to set up a sustainable home for themselves.

Homelessness is a key intervention point for Supporting People services. A larger proportion of homeless households are vulnerable than in the community as a whole. They can be excluded from services and from employment, and democratic rights and opportunities. The disruption that temporary accommodation moves can cause puts pressure on health, social services and education. There is substantial evidence that homelessness and insecure housing is associated with a higher incidence of both mental and physical health. Support services that focus on prevention of repeat homelessness consequently promote social inclusion, community cohesion and health improvement.

Our new Strategy recognises that a broader more inclusive approach is required, responding to the many different kinds and intensity of support need experienced by homeless people. It also recognises that access to suitable accommodation is the first priority for homeless people and that support services must therefore work at the heart not the edge of mainstream homelessness services operated by the council and key housing partners

During 2004/5, we have taken the steps necessary to align our Supporting People and Homelessness strategies. Our joint objective is to achieve integrated services that tackle the root causes of homelessness, prevent homelessness and reduce the risk of repeat homelessness.

Supporting People and Homelessness services will work together to:

- recognise the support needs of all homeless applicants, not just those falling into the statutory vulnerability categories
- improve the range of housing options available for people in need, and support people to make suitable choices
- help people to re-establish their lives once accommodation issues have been resolved
- ensure sufficient capacity to respond to the flow of new homelessness applications and temporary accommodation admissions

During 2005/6, we will continue to re-model Barnet's Supporting People and Homelessness services in order to:

- Carry out trigger assessments of all homeless applicants' support needs as an integrated part of housing need assessment
- Re-focus the in-house homelessness support team to manage referrals and nominations to specialist support services available from external Supporting People providers
- Create a new support team responsible for putting together packages of housing options that will enable vulnerable people to resolve their housing and support needs and prevent homelessness
- Commission a new private sector tenancy service to help vulnerable single people to access private rented housing, and support them to maintain their tenancies
- Use the new services to support not just those in priority need under the homelessness legislation but other groups such as offenders and people with drug/alcohol problems

Community Regeneration

Our Supporting People strategy will pay its part in Barnet's estate regeneration programme. Closely reflecting the localities that score highest on the national Multiple Deprivation Index, Barnet's social housing estates present key opportunities for Supporting People action to tackle social exclusion and build community cohesion.

Barnet's 17,000 social housing tenancies represent the main destination for homeless people and those in severe housing need assisted by the council's rehousing services. Our future strategy will focus services to support this vulnerable population, particularly those who face difficulty in managing their tenancies and who are at most risk of repeat homelessness. We intend to expand floating support services for social housing tenants, ensure that they work closely with housing management services, and deliver positive outcomes to problems of arrears, anti-social behaviour and other tenancy problems

Covering four of the borough's poorest housing estates, Barnet has a comprehensive and ambitious regeneration programme in place to reshape the physical environment and tackle deep-rooted problems of poor health, unemployment and resident dissatisfaction. We will commission new Supporting People services to help vulnerable tenants affected by the large-scale transfer and resettlement programmes that will be necessary.

We will use these specific interventions as a platform to meet the broader needs of vulnerable tenants. Barnet's wider programmes aim to promote resident involvement and empowerment, provide access to skills and jobs, drive down health and economic inequalities, and tackle crime and the fear of crime. Supporting People services offer a key opportunity to remove barriers and create clear pathways to independence and inclusion for those less able to take up the benefits enjoyed by the majority of the borough's population

A HEALTHY AND CARING COMMUNITY

Extra Care Sheltered Housing

North London Housing Strategy - the sub-region is committed to a strategy of enabling older people to remain independent for longer and to offering a broader range of choice with their housing options and support, which avoids forcing them into residential or nursing care. To achieve this there is a need both to remodel existing sheltered housing and to develop more extra care services which can easily adapt to the changing physical and support needs of residents as they become older

For Barnet's sheltered housing, we have set in place a ten-year programme to reshape services by:

- Increasing the amount of extra care sheltered housing by 140 units
- Creating 60 specialist units for people with dementia
- Enabling the provision of an extra 234 leasehold units
- Disposing and de-designating 737 unpopular units.

Supporting People is a key partner in this programme:

- Two Extra Care services are in development, both with Housing Corporation funding in place and are expected to come on stream from 2007/8. The new services will provide xxx new units for older people most at risk of admission to residential care.
- Together the two Extra Care services will deliver person-centred support and care in lifetime homes, funded jointly by Supporting People and social services, in order to help older people to stay living independently in their own homes for as long as possible
- Two further Extra Care projects have been identified and are in initial planning stages for delivery toward the end of the period of this strategy, subject to capital funding
- In line with Barnet's priorities, we plan to commission a second scheme for ethnic minority elders, building on the success of Asra HA's service for the older Asian community
- Three unpopular blocks have been released for other Supporting People priorities, two for young troubled people and one for redevelopment as part of our Learning Disability Modernisation programme, both outlined in more detail below

Alternatives to Sheltered Housing

Our 2005/6 service review programme will examine the present arrangements for support services in sheltered housing. Representing over £1M of Supporting People grant investment and delivering support to almost 2000 tenants, the sector is a key housing choice for older people in need. But the accommodation based support model used in sheltered housing is not necessarily best suited to the needs of Barnet's ageing population. Less than 3% of people over 60 live in sheltered housing and the sector is the preferred option for very few of the borough's older residents.

Our Supporting People Needs Survey has shown that home owners are more likely to have unmet needs, with 38% reported to have unmet needs for Supporting People eligible

support compared with 10% of those living in other tenures. Unmet needs were particularly common for support with help with maintaining the home, with adaptations, with safety and security, with benefit maximisation and with managing finances.

Cross-Tenure Floating Support - offering support where and when it is most needed

Barnet's first 60-unit floating support service for older people opened in January 2005, available free of charge to people in all tenures - including home owners, social housing tenants, and private tenants. Nominated via social services, the service users receive support for up to six months to help with specific housing-related problems such as sorting out bills, helping with benefit forms, or getting repairs done. The service particularly targets older people who need one-off support following illness or bereavement, and aims to make sure that the right links are made if longer-term support is required

In response to the Survey findings, our programme will:

- review the justification for accommodation based support for sheltered housing tenants and ensure that there is fair access to support services irrespective of housing tenure
- review the performance of Barnet's 60-unit floating support service for older people, launched in January 2004, and subject to satisfactory assessment -
- if our pilot floating support service proves successful, we will aim to triple capacity of this type of cross-tenure support to 200 units by April 2006
- investigate the scope for extending floating support to include people living in the community with physical and sensory impairment who have very little access to Supporting People support services at present

Telecare - providing greater safety and security at home

During 2005/6, we plan to launch a new pilot service to extend Barnet's Lifeline Service the fast-response alarm service already delivered to over xxxxx vulnerable people in all housing tenures in Barnet. The Telecare pilot will use new technology to help 50 more vulnerable older people to live safely at home by alerting service users and mobile support staff if a risk situation occurs. The service has the potential to offer new opportunities for supported independence for people at most risk, including dementia.

Learning Disability Modernisation Programme

Anticipating national policy, Barnet has since 1996 been creating avenues for people with learning disabilities to choose independent housing in the community. As a result, less than 10% of people with learning disabilities in Barnet are living in residential care - and one-third of these residents have told us that they would like to move on to supported housing.

An assessment by independent consultants sets out the targets for our programme. We have taken the first step in April 2004 by transferring all the local authority's residential care homes and other assets to the Notting Hill Housing Trust for replacement by:

- 41 new units of supported and semi-supported housing

- three new resource centres to provide training and leisure activities
- Two brand new residential care homes

In June 2005, a new Housing Corporation-funded purpose built project will open, jointly commissioned by Supporting People and Barnet Learning Disability Service, providing new supported housing for 10 people from the transferred stock and enabling the next stage of the redevelopment programme to proceed.

Barnet and its sub-regional partners are committed to extending the benefits of extra care sheltered housing to a broader client group, including people with a learning disability who are living longer but who often suffer the illnesses of old age much earlier in their lives

MAKING BARNET THE SAFEST BOROUGH IN LONDON

Our third key theme is Community Safety. In common with the national and regional situation, Barnet has low Supporting People investment in services for those who present the greatest risk to themselves and to the communities in which they live.

We know from the service review programme and Barnet's Supporting People Needs Survey that many mainstream services working with vulnerable people are working with people who have multiple needs such as substance misuse, mental health and offending behaviour. Whilst these providers are offering a valuable service to a high risk client group they are not resourced to manage people with complex needs.

Our first Supporting People priority is to develop new services that target the people of greatest concern to the Barnet Safer Communities Partnership, particularly people involved with:

- the Youth Offending Team
- the Drug Interventions Programme
- Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements, and
- Prolific and other Priority Offenders

Supporting Offenders with Complex or High Support Needs

StepForward Project - a 10-unit former council sheltered housing block now transferred to the Supporting People programme and providing a safe and supportive setting with 24 hour cover for troubled young people, including 5 Youth Offending Team clients and young homeless people with risk behaviour referred by Leaving Care Team. The council has committed a second unpopular sheltered housing block to create a similar service capable of meeting the requirements of both referral agencies

Extended Hours Service - Identified by the Probation Service as a model for development, the service supports clients with complex needs including complex needs and offending behaviour. During its first year, the service has provided stability in semi-independent housing for high-risk MAPPA referrals to the council's Homeless Persons Unit. One option under consideration is to use the existing accommodation based service together with units leased by Barnet's Housing Service to provide an expanded core-and-cluster support model.

Widening the Support Framework

Our second key priority is lower level support for offenders in housing need referred by the Probation Service and Barnet's two substance misuse agencies. Appropriate sustainable accommodation is key to the successfully resettlement of prisoners and effective management of offenders in the community. Whilst the Homelessness Act 2002 extended the priority needs categories to include people made vulnerable due to a custodial sentence, few ex-prisoners or offenders are assessed as being in 'priority need'. The Social Exclusion Report (2002) *reducing Reoffending by Ex-prisoners* found that homeless offenders are 20% more likely to reoffend.

Tenders have been invited for a major new jointly funded and commissioned service to open in 2005 to provide access to privately rented housing for offenders and substance misusers. We are confident from examination of services provided elsewhere in London that the project is viable and cost effective. The successful contractor will undertake property leasing and provide integrated support and housing management, extending local capacity to help those with challenging needs.

5 CROSS AUTHORITY STATEMENT

Barnet welcomes the move to a regional and sub-regional approach to Supporting People. As a member of the North London Sub-regional Partnership we are keen to ensure that Supporting People grant investment benefits all London boroughs and all Londoners

We are an active member of the sub-region; partner boroughs (Barnet, Westminster, Camden, Islington, Haringey and Enfield) are meeting constructively at both chief officer and operational officer level. We have identified exciting opportunities for joint working and our sub-regional strategy identifies our shared aims and objectives.

Our key Supporting People themes reflect the priorities of the North London Housing Strategy, including investment in extra care services for older people, and in modern supported housing provision for people with learning disabilities and other care groups.

Most importantly, our Strategy underpins the Partnership's plans for a step change in housing supply to achieve London's affordable housing targets:

- support for vulnerable tenants to help create sustainable new communities in Cricklewood and other key development areas in London
- support for vulnerable tenants affected by Barnet's regeneration programme for our priority estates, helping with intra-estate moves and tackling needs in the borough's areas of highest deprivation
- support for homeless people in choice based housing options and in taking up opportunities for mobility within London and the sub-region

London's Supporting People Strategy

The Association of London Government too is setting a challenging agenda for action to support four of London's most vulnerable groups, recognising that needs cross borough boundaries and that sub-regional solutions may be best.

For women at risk of domestic violence, Barnet plays its part in London's network of refuges, with the borough's third refuge due to open in April 2005. Our programme looks to expand the cross borough support service which Barnet has piloted with Enfield and Haringey for women choosing not to move to a refuge

For single homeless people, Supporting People is aligned with the priorities of our homelessness strategy, providing support to help vulnerable people take up new housing opportunities for people who cannot access social housing as well as supporting the most vulnerable who are provided with temporary accommodation

For people with alcohol and drug problems and for offenders, North London is relatively well-placed compared with other sub-regions but there are few specialist services. Barnet will examine the development options with the North London sub-region, the Probation Service and the sub-regions' Drug and Alcohol Action teams

Our Commitment - Barnet will work with regional and sub-regional partners to

- plan the right balance in the provision of supported housing locally and regionally
- participate in joint procurement with sub-regional partners to improve value for money from new and existing resources
- protect cross-authority provision where justified by supply and demand factors
- negotiate nomination rights and funding mechanisms to enable access to support services for people moving appropriately to specialist supported housing outside Barnet
- jointly commission new floating support services for people moving to general needs housing in London's major development areas

North London Action Planning

We believe that joint working will allow us to develop more effective solutions to the needs of vulnerable people, to use our resources more flexibly to provide greater geographical coverage, to take opportunities to meet specialist service requirements and to provide more choice for service users

We have a three year action plan to:

- agree benchmark unit costs and hourly rates across the sub region
- agree a common monitoring framework that measures outcomes of services
- agree processes for reviewing designated cross-authority services
- identify areas for cross-authority commissioning
- a peer review process for Supporting People programme management.

Efficiency in Procurement

- Working with our four North London borough partners, Barnet plans to participate in a jointly commissioned floating support service intended to operate across the sub region. We intend to use the specification and procurement process as a template for further cross-borough provision, producing economies of scale and a model for outcome-based service delivery.
- 332 separate Supporting People-funded provider organisations operate in North London so the North London Supporting People group have commissioned a jointly funded project to assess and accredit Supporting People providers for contract purposes across the sub-region. We will use standardised accreditation criteria developed by the West London Supporting People group, providing consistency through joint working across 13 boroughs

6 SUPPORTING PEOPLE NEEDS

The framework of Supporting People services inherited in April 2003 reflects historic assessments of needs and priorities. To help develop Barnet's 5-Year Strategy, we commissioned a Supporting People Needs Survey in 2004 to examine local and national information about the range of needs for housing-related support services.

The Survey sets out evidence of substantial unmet needs as well as sample analyses of the needs of over 2,700 vulnerable people living in Barnet and involved with the borough's statutory services, covering all primary need groups.

Temporary Accommodation - 1800 homeless people living in temporary accommodation, including one in 23 of all Barnet's children

Homelessness - 6000 new homelessness applications each year, more than the total annual social housing supply, and a repeat homelessness rate of 5%

Families - 800 new homelessness applications from families with support needs accepted annually

Single Homelessness - 1700 single people becoming homeless annually but not entitled to housing provision from the council

Older People - almost 40% of older people, mainly home owners, in need but receiving no support

Learning Disabilities - almost 1400 people with learning disabilities, half of whom with no involvement with services, and nearly 300 placed in residential care

Mental Health Problems - 2500 people on the Care Programme Approach living in the community, including one-third on enhanced CPA

Domestic Violence - 3000 referrals annually to Barnet police Domestic Violence Support Service, including 20% repeat victimisation

Young People - 200 young vulnerable people becoming homeless or leaving care each year, and 550 annual referrals to Youth Offending Team

Offenders – 600 people involved with Probation, a mixture of prisoners and offenders on community supervision

Further details for each primary need group are set out in the Sector Summaries in the Appendix to this Strategy.

In response to the levels of demand indicated by the Survey data, Barnet's Supporting People services generated just 350 vacancies in 2003/4, excluding sheltered housing relets for older people. Our challenge is to remodel our programme to ensure that available supply is targeted to deliver:

- time-limited support where it is most needed
- task based support that achieves specific measurable outcomes
- flexible support that is focused on needs not properties

Summary information about current services, unmet needs and proposed developments for each primary need group are set out in the Appendix to this strategy.

7 SUPPORTING PEOPLE RESOURCES

Barnet will receive just £7.2M in Supporting People grant funding for 2005/6 from the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, equivalent to less than 50p per head of population and only 58% of the national average level of Supporting People funding.

We have generated new resources for investment through better management of the programme we inherited in 2003. These have been sufficient to meet the government's efficiency savings targets for Barnet in each of the three years 2003-6 and to provide £300,000 more for new services in 2005-2006.

2005/6 Development Pilots - taking forward Barnet's Supporting People Needs assessment and making use of programme savings from 2004/5, the following small-scale pilot floating support services intended to meet the immediate needs of small populations of vulnerable people and build capacity, have been approved for funding in 2005/6

- Families in need and involved with child protection services, including families in temporary accommodation and people failing to manage their housing and at risk of homelessness
- Chinese people with mental illness and other vulnerabilities, taking forward the DCLG-funded research by the Chinese Mental Health Association
- Precariously-housed people at risk of rough-sleeping identified through Barnet's Homelessness Day Centre.
- Frail older people at risk of falls who would benefit from Barnet's pilot Telecare support service to help stay safe at home.
- Drug users involved with the criminal justice system, receiving housing support as part of Barnet's joint DIP-funded Throughcare Aftercare and Day Service

Each of these pilot projects is sustainable at current small-scale capacity within projected budget resources and subject to review of needs and performance at the end of the pilot period during 2005/6

Table 1 shows Barnet's baseline annual budget, and compares the current level of investment with London and national data:

- local expenditure per head of population is less than half of the London average
- expenditure per head on some groups in Barnet is close to or above the London or national averages - including young people, domestic violence and mental illness
- expenditure on other groups is very low compared with the averages, particularly for single homeless people, older people and people with learning disabilities
- there is very little expenditure at all on some groups, for example people with drug or alcohol problems and offenders

	Barnet Baseline Supporting People Budget 2005/6		Weekly Expenditure per 1000 population		
	£	%	Barnet	London	National
Mental Illness	2,188,251	29.06	130.98	196.24	109.89
Single Homelessness	1,041,889	13.83	62.36	212.18	112.13
Older people	1,487,882	19.75	89.06	185.32	214.73
Young People	828,970	11.01	49.62	56.63	34.65
Learning Disability	785,649	10.43	47.03	116.62	178.54
Domestic Violence	388,067	5.15	23.23	30.97	21.77
Generic	270,739	3.59	16.21	64.98	34.95
Homeless Families	172,391	2.29	10.32	data n/a	
Physical Disability / Sensory Impairment	101,757	1.35	6.09	11.69	16.39
Teenage Parents	94,398	1.25	5.65	5.86	6.61
HIV / Aids	13,313	0.18	0.80	7.13	1.43
Drugs	71,671	0.95	4.29	8.65	8.67
Alcohol	6,428	0.09	0.38	19.66	7.57
Offenders	0	0	0	21.87	17.97
	7,451,405		446.02	937.80	765.30
Alarm services	79,425	1.05			
	7,530,830	99.98			

Our Supporting People Needs survey and secondary data analysis show substantial levels of unmet need among Barnet's vulnerable residents. We are confident that we are able to achieve even better value for money from our programme but we also know that additional resources are essential to deliver our vision for Barnet's Supporting People programme.

Barnet welcomes the introduction of a national Distribution Formula that will allocate funding to administering authorities according to robust indices of need removing the inequalities explicit in the interim funding system. We support the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister aims in maintaining the pace of change. National legacy funding tripled in the four years to 2003 and Barnet believes that a needs based funding system could and should be implemented with similar speed.

Unit Costs

Our analysis of resources shows that although Barnet receives much less Supporting People grant than the average in London and nationally, most services in Barnet cost less than average. This does not necessarily mean that we get better value for money. Almost all of Barnet's services offer lower-level support that cost less to provide.

Exceptions include supported housing services for women at risk of violence, for people with mental illness leaving hospital or residential care, and for young troubled people. For these groups the Table shows that Barnet's unit costs are much closer to or even higher than the London and national averages

Average Unit Costs (£ per week)			
	Barnet	London	National
Domestic Violence	195.85	187.80	186.20
Mental Illness	161.80	144.45	139.72
Learning Disability	125.50	194.05	258.58
Young People	94.07	129.31	126.60
Single Homeless	75.98	117.68	118.32
Teenage Parents	58.40	106.86	126.65
HIV / Aids	31.91	70.76	72.06
Alcohol Problems	30.82	124.68	110.68
Drug Problems	30.54	140.11	119.58
Generic	28.21	45.31	50.47
Older people	20.05	23.31	16.95
Physical Disability / Sensory Impairment	17.08	51.79	70.99

We will continue to closely monitor unit costs and negotiate appropriate rates for services taking into account:

- regional and national data showing the range and average unit costs of comparable services
- the ratio of staff to service users and the price per support hour of service delivery
- the balance between the costs of employing support workers and of overhead costs
- budgetary information supplied by providers, and any special factors which may affect the costs of particular types of services

We will work with sub-regional partners to keep up-to-date information about current cost comparators in London, agree ceilings where appropriate, seek economies of scale, and use market testing and procurement to ensure optimum value for money.

8 CAPITAL FUNDING

Barnet's Capital Strategy demonstrates how investment decisions are linked to the policy framework, and how innovative approaches to partnership and leveraging in of external funding are applied. It also demonstrates Barnet's approach to generating capital resources through asset disposals and contributions from developers, as well as in accessing funding from the Housing Corporation where necessary

As a result, we have been able to put in place deliverable programmes for Extra Care sheltered housing and for modernisation of provision for people with learning disabilities. Through the de-designation of unpopular sheltered housing, we have ensured that surplus assets are recycled to create supported housing in line with the priorities of Barnet's Supporting People Strategy, such as our StepForward project which provides a safe setting for a high support service for 10 troubled young people.

Our priority to commission new accommodation based services only for the most vulnerable people who need on-site support means that these services are expensive. Uncertainties about the future national level of Supporting People grant funding have consequently limited local authorities' ability to bid successfully for Housing Corporation capital resources for new projects.

We are keen to take advantage of opportunities, for example:

- To create new supported housing within Barnet's development sites, using s106 agreements with developers rather than public subsidy to deliver quality cluster flat models of provision
- Through re-modelling unsatisfactory hostel provision - not just in Barnet but more widely within the North London sub-region, using nomination agreements to create cross-borough resources to provide high support settings for groups such as offenders and people with drug and alcohol problems

Barnet welcomes the Government's commitment to creating stability in national Supporting People funding and to redistribute resources to benefit under-funded areas. Accommodation-based service proposals identified as major priorities but for which it has not been possible to identify funding at present include

- Well supervised, high-support accommodation based projects for young offenders
- abstinence provision as a cross-borough resource for people with drug and alcohol problems
- re-provision of existing group home provision for people with mental illness on enhanced care plans
- step down provision providing alternatives to residential care for mentally disordered offenders

In the interim, we will continue to prioritise capital resources to support our core programmes for older people and people with learning disabilities. We will adopt a prudent approach to capital bidding for other projects until we are confident that we have the resources necessary to maintain long-term revenue funding.

Aligning Capital Funding with Supporting People Priorities - Barnet strongly supports a national review of the arrangements for capital funding for supported housing projects. Although the Supporting People programme has reformed the arrangements for revenue funding for support services, the same principles are not yet clearly reflected in Housing Corporation capital funding rules. Registered social landlords need reassurance in particular that repayment of social housing grant will not be required.

- If there is disposal of land and buildings to create cross-subsidy for a new or reprovided Supporting People scheme that will produce better value,
- If accommodation based services in properties designated as supported housing are decommissioned or remodelled to create tenure-free floating support which is not linked to specific properties

9 SUPPLY ANALYSIS

Barnet's Supporting People grant investment provides just 60% of the national average number of units per head of population, 74% of the London average, and 90% of the outer London average. Services for older people, mainly comprising sheltered housing, makes up more than half of existing supply in Barnet and Outer London, and an even higher share nationally. Provision for other groups is much lower, with relatively minor numeric differences between national, regional and local averages for most client groups.

HOUSEHOLD UNITS				
	"Typical Provision" DCLG Profile - 2002	Units per 1,000 population		
		National	Outer London	Barnet
Older People	11.19	11.99	6.62	5.89
Mental Illness	1.23	0.81	0.81	0.98
Single Homeless	0.90	0.95	0.72	0.82
Physical Disability		0.25	0.22	0.57
Generic	not recorded	0.69	0.78	0.57
Young People	0.62	0.27	0.28	0.53
Learning Disability	0.54	0.69	0.53	0.37
Homeless Families	0.15	0.00	0.75	0.20
Domestic Violence	0.39	0.12	0.13	0.11
All Other Groups	2.18	0.88	0.66	0.12
Total	17.20	16.40	11.28	10.16

2002 supply profile data and more recent national research commissioned by the DCLG suggest shortfalls of between 50-200 units in Barnet compared with national and regional comparators for all client groups except older people with support needs. However, the data is of very limited value since it merely compares the patterns of existing supply without reference to the need for services.

In contrast our Supporting People needs survey show substantial unmet needs among all client groups. The survey findings mirror the broad message of the government's work on the Supporting People Distribution Formula - that supply in Barnet is well below what is needed and that major expansion is required to bring supply and demand into better balance.

Types of Services

Knowing the overall number of people helped by Supporting People services is less important than understanding the kinds of services that are provided. Compared with London and national averages, a much higher proportion of Barnet people is helped by floating support services, but there is a smaller than average supply of accommodation based units

Units per 1,000 population			
	National	London	Barnet
Supported Housing	13.77	10.93	7.81
Floating Support	2.63	3.15	2.35
	16.40	14.08	10.16

Our Supporting People Needs Survey has shown that Barnet needs more services that offer higher support for people at most risk. At present there are very few services that offer sufficient on-site staffing or 24 hour cover to meet the needs of very vulnerable groups. These services are the most expensive of all to provide.

Supporting People SERVICE TYPES			
	Number of Household Units		
	Higher Support Accommodation Based Services	Lower Support Accommodation Based Services	Floating Support
Generic	0	0	184
Young People	34	8	127
Teenage Parents	0	6	25
Domestic Violence	24	0	14
Single Homeless	0	157	106
Homeless Families	0	36	31
Alcohol	0	0	4
Drugs	0	0	45
Offenders	0	6	0
Mental Illness	77	108	129
Learning Disability	13	82	26
Physical Disability / Sensory Impairment	0	164	11
HIV / Aids	0	2	6
Older people	0	1637	252
	148	2200	960

Client Group Analysis

More detailed comments on provision for each client group are set out in the Sector Profiles at appendix. Key points are as follows

Older People

- This sector has the largest capacity of all Supporting People sectors but mainly delivers low support using traditional sheltered housing models of provision.
- There is currently no extra care provision and virtually no specialist services for older people with additional needs such as frailty, dementia or mental illness.
- There is very little support available for elderly home owners and tenants in mainstream rented housing.
- 250 sheltered housing units provided by 4 charitable organisations not subject to Supporting People contracts, equivalent to 15% of Supporting People-funded capacity, and 700 private sector leasehold sheltered housing units, are excluded from the data on Supporting People expenditure and supply.

Mental Health

- This sector is the most expensive of all client groups sectors in Barnet, accounting for 29% of local Supporting People grant investment compared with the national average of 14% but making up only 10% of total funded units
- This anomaly results from the development of a group of high-support services with a value of £1.1M during 2003 by a private sector provider.
- Capacity overall is consequently well above regional and national averages in contrast to all other Supporting People sectors in Barnet, and includes a varied range of accommodation based and floating support.
- However, there are no specialist services exclusively intended for older people with mental illness or for mentally disordered offenders.

Learning Disability

- The capacity of the sector is close to average regional provision but there are few services providing high level support so grant expenditure and unit costs are much lower than average.
- The sector mainly comprises accommodation based support in group home models of provision, and there is very little floating support for people living in the community
- In contrast with other main primary need groups, the learning disabilities sector has experienced little growth during the past three years

Generic Services

- This sector is mainly concerned with low level floating/ visiting support for statutorily homeless people living in temporary accommodation and for vulnerable council tenants.
- Services are mainly delivered by in-house local authority teams. The sector will be extensively re-modelled during 2005 as a result of service reviews completed during 2004

Single Homeless People

- This sector is concerned with support for childless people with support needs who often do not qualify for housing under the homelessness legislation.
- Barnet's Supporting People Needs Survey has found that many single homeless people have multiple complex needs, including mental ill-health, drug and alcohol problems, and offending risks
- Provision is very low compared with regional and national averages

Young People / Care Leavers / Teenage Parents

- These sectors are almost entirely focused on support for young people who are statutorily homeless or who are leaving local authority care
- Services provide a small number of relatively expensive, high support accommodation based units and a large number of floating support units offering basic support at low unit costs.
- Capacity is above regional and national averages but grant expenditure is lower.

Domestic Violence

- The sector comprises Barnet's two women's refuges and a small cross-authority floating support service.
- Planned expansion in 2005 will increase capacity to regional and national averages during 2005, although well below DCLG's "Typical Provision" profile.

Other Services

- In common with the national and regional pattern, there is very little Supporting People grant investment in the sectors specifically concerned with drug/alcohol problems, offenders, HIV/Aids and physical/sensory disability.
- The few services operating in these sectors all offer inexpensive low level support.
- Some capacity exists for these client groups in services intended mainly for other groups but lacks specialist focus

Ethnicity, Faith and Culture

- with the exception of one sheltered housing service for Asian elders and a pipeline generic service for vulnerable Chinese people, there are no specialist BME services in Barnet.
- there is a significant range of services for Jewish people across several client group sectors, particularly sheltered housing for older people

Key Finding from Supply Analysis - Barnet's Supporting People services have developed incrementally over many years and constitute a basic framework of provision:

- A large supported housing sector offering low support for older people and other groups using sheltered housing models of provision
- A small stock of more expensive provision offering medium and high support in traditional shared housing / group home / hostel settings for people with mental illness and learning disabilities, including emergency refuge provision for women at risk of domestic violence
- A very small stock of more modern self-contained housing in cluster flat settings offering medium and high support for people with mental illness, for young people and teenage parents
- A range of floating support services developed relatively recently, mainly ring-fenced for use by the council's statutory homelessness service, and offering low-level visiting support

10 MANAGING THE PROGRAMME

Service Review Programme

Barnet's Service Review Programme started in 2003 and by March 2006 we will have reviewed all of the 150 Supporting People-funded services operating in the borough. During the final year of the 3-year programme, we will complete reviews of Barnet's single homelessness, domestic violence and physical disability sectors by Summer 2005. During the remainder of the year we will carry out a comprehensive review of sheltered housing and ancillary services for older people

The review programme has found many strengths and weaknesses across Barnet's support services, with the great majority of contractors working hard to improve service quality and value for money.

We will continue to take decisive action where services cannot demonstrate their contribution to Supporting People objectives. 16 services have been decommissioned, generating over £650K annual savings of which £192K is attributable to the withdrawal of transitional funding from 7 registered care homes

Service Review Programme - Outcomes					
	Mental Illness	Learning Disability	Generic services	Young People/ Teenage parents	Other services
Renew contract with action plan	6	7	2	0	0
Temporary contract with action plan	19	1	1	5	0
Remodelling	4	1	4	2	0
Decommission	4	6	2	0	4
	33	15	9	7	4

The service review programme has focused on the largest, most expensive and most recently created services. Review-based remodelling as well as more routine service developments have significantly altered the position since April 2003, with many changes negotiated with service providers in order to:

- provide additional floating support units with no increase in contract values
- make extra savings to fund new services to tackle unmet needs

SERVICE REVIEW PROGRAMME	
Additional floating support capacity negotiated at nil additional cost	
Target Groups	Additional Units
Young people at risk	36
Care leavers	40
Homeless teenage parents	17
People with HIV/AIDS	6
Homeless people with mental illness	33
Women at risk of domestic violence	4
People with drug / alcohol problems	7
	143

Move On

Barnet's service reviews have found chronic move-on problems reducing the effectiveness of many services. As a result -

- Services intended to provide short-term high support, for example, for people with mental illness leaving hospital, lose relevance and value unless residents can move on in a planned and timely manner to more independent housing. Delays can de-motivate and de-skill. Other people needing the service may stay longer in hospital or have to move somewhere less suitable
- Smaller properties for people with low needs may be better freed up for use as high-support housing for people less able to manage with floating support. Delays in moving on can mean that support services are being provided - and paid for - when they are no longer needed.

Move on in Barnet - we will prioritise social housing move-on for people living in high-support short-term projects and ready to move to greater independence services. For accommodation based services for less vulnerable people, we will expect providers to make use of other housing options and to refocus support that is no longer needed by service users

Barnet Supporting People is working with the council's Housing Service and the North London Move On Accommodation Project to find solutions. Council housing has an important part to play but faces many pressures and cannot meet every need.

- Barnet has a large and active private rented sector and operate rent guarantee schemes which found homes for 350 homeless families and single people in 2004. With joint funding from the council's housing service we will expand this provision and ensure it is targeted to meet Supporting People move-on priorities
- Move-on Agreements giving priority for rehousing have been negotiated with the council's Housing Service to benefit all of our key Supporting People services providing high short-term support for people with mental illness, young people and teenage parents

- Four low support hostel-based services have been closed and will be re-commissioned with extra Supporting People funding to meet high support needs in line with homelessness priorities and with Move-on Agreements in place

Move On Accommodation Project - a collaborative venture initiated by social landlords and support providers in response to the lack of social housing for move-on in London. Its aim is to bring together best practice and innovation in move-on for people living in supported housing

Barnet is working with North London partner boroughs to contribute to the second phase of the project - to plan and implement a move-on strategy to develop a common approach to allocations and deliver practical solutions

Outcomes

Irrespective of price, services cannot deliver good value for money unless they provide successful outcomes for service users. Services are intended to be preventative - by supporting people to remain independent and avoid crises such as care admissions and homelessness. The extent to which service users achieve and maintain independent living and the incidence of negative outcomes are therefore key measures of success.

Barnet believes that the outcome data now being collected and reported by all Supporting People services locally and nationally provides a robust basis for performance assessment. Our service reviews have shown that it is also crucial to recognise that:

- services that support the most vulnerable tenants will not be able to achieve the same performance as those helping people at less risk.
- refocusing services so that they support people at more risk means that the quality of support must improve to maintain similar performance

Barnet's performance data indicates a very low incidence of negative outcomes for service users in Barnet. This reflects well on the quality of support being provided but we will test the capacity for improvement by:

- bench-marking with our North London partners to establish baseline performance levels and targets for similar services
- continuing to audit case samples with commissioning partners
- re-specifying referral criteria to ensure a consistent match between service users' needs, the level of support provided, and the outcome performance target

Performance Monitoring

As well as the service review programme, Barnet closely monitors the performance of Supporting People service contractors. We will continue to negotiate reductions in grant payments where less staff are provided or less people are being supported than are specified in Supporting People contracts. Since 2003, Barnet has achieved savings of £1.3M as a result of performance monitoring which have been used to invest in new services.

Savings from under-performance against contracts are likely to reduce since our objective is to work with providers to improve their capacity to deliver in accordance with Supporting People requirements. Barnet is therefore unable to rely on this source of extra funding in the future - so we have used the savings that have been made to invest in short-term pilot projects to inform our development programme and build capacity for long-term growth.

As well as scrutinising inputs and outputs, our performance monitoring framework aims to drive forward improvements in the quality and focus of Barnet's services. Our analysis of providers' 2004/5 self-assessments of compliance with the national Quality Assessment Framework shows steady improvement in meeting its challenging standards, and is confirmed by the validation work undertaken as part of the service review programme and post-review progress monitoring

Overall conclusions from contract management and service review since April 2003 are that:

- There are high levels of demand for almost all services, with the exception of some sheltered housing services for older people
- There are low vacancy rates and high utilisation levels across all sectors, again with the exception of some sheltered housing services for older people
- Almost all services achieve good satisfaction ratings from service users and key stakeholders,

However, the council's best value reviews and Supporting People service reviews have also found significant structural weaknesses in the ways in which many services are used, including:

- Use of low support accommodation based services to provide housing solutions irrespective of support needs
- A lack of structured needs assessment processes by referring agencies and a consequent risk of inconsistent prioritisation of potential service users
- Insufficient management by statutory stakeholders of referral and nomination rights to services and of service user throughput
- Low rates of movement between support services and of move on to independent housing

New Service Developments

Barnet's new service development programme has achieved incremental increases in service provision where supply is weakest. Since April 2003, the Supporting People Commissioning Board has approved new services providing 167 new units at a full year value of £, funded through savings on existing contracts and annual pipeline funding allocated by the DCLG.

Service	Provider	Units	Target Client Group
Young People at risk - supported housing	StepForward	10	Troubled young people, care leavers
Extended Hours Service - supported housing	Umbrella	12	Dual diagnosis with offending histories
Refuge 2 - supported housing	Barnet Womens Aid	8	Women at risk of domestic violence
Crisis House - supported housing	Barnet Voice	4	People with mental illness
Floating Support	Hornsey Housing Trust	60	Older people with support needs in all housing tenures
Floating Support	Homeless Action in Barnet	12	Single homeless people with alcohol problems
Floating Support	Turning Point	25	Homeless people involved with the Drugs Intervention Programme
Floating Support	Chinese Mental Health Association	20	Vulnerable Chinese people needing support to access statutory services
Floating Support	St Pancras and Humanist HA	20	Vulnerable families involved with child protection services
		167	

11 COMMISSIONING and PROCUREMENT

Financed mainly or entirely from housing benefits until 2003, many Supporting People services were free to develop and operate independently without direct accountability to external commissioners. The national Supporting People programme requires Barnet to decide how services should be commissioned and the conditions under which should services receive Supporting People grant funding.

Contract Values and Organisations

Although there are some 150 Supporting People-funded services in Barnet, just 23 services receiving over £100,000 pa take up over 60% of Supporting People investment. The remaining 21 services take up 47% of grant but deliver only 12% of total Supporting People-funded units. A further 34% of grant is invested in 77 contracts valued at £50-100K pa, providing slightly under half of all units. 41 contracts are valued under £10K pa, representing just £166k investment but 12% of units.

28 separate registered social landlords in Barnet are Supporting People-funded, ranging from major regional and national associations to very small organisations not actively involved in capital development. The local authority sector is Barnet's largest single provider, delivering mainly large-scale services associated with sheltered housing, alarm services and more recently created homelessness support services, representing a total of £1.6M investment.

17 private sector companies and individuals receive £1.3M or 18% of grant, including one organisation providing high support mental health services and receiving almost 14%. A small number of charities and voluntary organisations provide mainly specialist learning disability services and low-cost sheltered housing services but include one major partner delivering homelessness related services and receiving almost 12% of total investment.

Modernising Service Commissioning

The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has rightly set a challenging pace of change. Barnet has an ambitious programme to modernise Supporting People commissioning. The changes that are needed will bring added value to the Supporting People programme

Barnet is keen to take forward the Gershon agenda. We believe that it is unlikely that the framework of services inherited in 2003 represents what would be commissioned now if we were to start afresh. Major change requires careful preparation and options appraisal, so Barnet will work closely with sub-regional partners, the Association of London Government and the Centre for Procurement Excellence to ensure an appropriate balance of local and cross-borough provision and observance of best practice in procurement.

Our priorities for re-commissioning and procurement are shaped by the key conclusions of our service review and monitoring programme -

- A range of providers offering low level floating support mainly to single homeless people in temporary accommodation nominated by the Homeless Persons Unit
- Significant variations in price not clearly attributable to differences in the intensity or quality of support

- Relatively unformed relationships between providers and the statutory agencies making referrals, and with providers of complementary services
- A need to replace some low-support accommodation based services with more flexible floating support

Our vision is a simpler framework of services that provides:

- basic short-term floating support for everyone who chooses it
- long term floating support for those with continuing support needs
- on-site support in purpose-designed housing for the most vulnerable whose needs can be best met by accommodation based services

For Accommodation based Support, we want to be sure that there are real benefits for service users in providing support that is tied to where they live. Our objective is to deliver support to wherever vulnerable people chose to live and that stays accessible irrespective of address changes.

For Floating Support, we believe that the benefits of client group-specific services are not clearly evidenced. Although exceptions are recognised, our starting point is a presumption that the most common kinds of support need are shared across client groups and that services should be responsive to individual circumstances.

Procurement Programme

Barnet intend to agree market testing and procurement arrangements with commissioning partners and accommodation providers to enable a three year tender programme covering all primary need groups and services:

INDICATIVE PROCUREMENT PROGRAMME		
2006/7	Floating support	All younger adult client groups
2007/8	Floating support	Older adults
2008/9	Accommodation based	High support provision

Many of Barnet's interim contracts first created in 2003 have expired and all will do so following completion of the service review programme. We recognise the continuing uncertainties facing service providers and our responsibility to continue to inform and consult concerning our Supporting People strategy. Most contracts have been extended temporarily and we will ensure full notice is provided concerning the changes that are planned

Sub Regional Working

The North London sub region (Barnet, Camden, Enfield, Haringey, Islington and Westminster) is developing a steady state contract for floating support services that:

- Defines measurable outcomes for the service user and the wider community over a 12-18 month period
- Is used in all six boroughs in the North London sub region
- Provides those authorities with monitoring information to ensure better management and value for money
- Enables the six authorities to benchmark the effectiveness of services
- Builds the capacity of the six authorities for further improvements in procurement and value for money

Working with the ALG and Centre for Procurement Excellence, the intention is to create a template applicable to other service types and available for use by other Supporting People administering authorities

Joint Commissioning

The current arrangements for administration of local Supporting People programmes through specialist Supporting People teams is an interim stage. From 2005/6, the Supporting People Administration Grant allocated to local authorities and used to fund Barnet's Supporting People Team staff will begin to reduce. Our programme for change must be deliverable, it must bring the changes that are needed quickly and it must avoid disrupting the support being provided to service users.

Our Strategy is to integrate Supporting People service commissioning within the mainstream of health, social care, community safety and housing provision. Supporting People services stand or fall according to the effectiveness of their contribution to the preventative agendas of the statutory organisations responsible for these functions. Barnet lacks the resources needed to operate truly choice based access to support for everyone in need. Until we are able to increase the range and capacity of the programme, our intention is that services should continue to give first priority to people identified as most in need by statutory services

By 2008, we intend that all grant funded services, including new services and legacy services, will be subject to joint contracts, jointly planning and commissioning with statutory stakeholders and subject to overview by Barnet's Supporting People Commissioning Board

Building Capacity

Our first objective is to build the capacity of Barnet's statutory organisations to take effective ownership of Supporting People services and resources.

Barnet has successfully negotiated Service Agreements between providers and key statutory stakeholders in order to define accountabilities, to manage risks and build capacity for partnership working in service development and commissioning.

Our Service Agreements will form part of Supporting People steady state contracts and define key areas including referral and nomination rights, service delivery targets, eligible support activities and relevant operational protocols. Monitoring arrangements including

programmed meetings between providers, commissioners and stakeholders are in place to develop knowledge and understanding of service operations.

During 2004/5 we have piloted Service Agreements for floating support services for young people and people with mental illness. During the next three years, we intend to roll out Service Agreements to cover all Supporting People services. Completion of the first round Service Review Programme in March 2006 will free up Supporting People Team resources for this purpose

Joint Commissioning	A Commissioning Partnership will be selected for every service. This will include the Supporting People Team and at least one of Barnet's statutory organisations.
Stakeholder Group	A Stakeholder Group will be identified for each service. The Commissioning Partnership will consult with the Stakeholder Group on all key decisions
Building Knowledge and Capacity	The Commissioning Partnership will work closely with services and with the Stakeholder Group to analyse and improve performance and practice
Service Specification	The Commissioning Partnership will develop detailed service specifications
Cross Borough Commissioning	The Commissioning Partnership will work with the ALG and sub-regional partners to identify services best provided across two or more boroughs
Procurement	The Commissioning Partnership will conduct market testing and if appropriate use competitive tender procedures to commission new services and to re-commission existing floating support services

Eligibility for Supporting People Grant Funding

The level of Supporting People grant allocated to Barnet is insufficient to meet the needs indicated by our Supporting People Needs Survey and by the local indices used in the National Distribution Formula currently in development.

Barnet's Supporting People Commissioning Board has therefore concluded that the core objective for Supporting People grant eligibility should be

Support to enable the individual to sustain their current accommodation or to move to more independent accommodation and not solely or mainly about the achievement of other wider aims such as an improved quality of life

Barnet will encourage service providers to deliver holistic support but as part of time-limited, person centred support planning that focuses on delivery of the core objective.

Our Strategy therefore intends the following priorities for Supporting People grant investment

Short-term services that offer help with specific practical tasks, normally for up to six months, for example, supporting people:

- who are at risk of homelessness and need help to tackle problems in managing their tenancies
- who are homeless people and need help with finding accommodation or resettling into temporary accommodation or long term housing
- who need help to deal with problems such as repairs, adaptations or home security

medium term services for up to two years to support more vulnerable people at most risk of homelessness or institutional admission, including those who:

- have a history of tenancy breakdown and repeat homelessness
- are moving on from high support accommodation after living in hospital or care

Long-term services funded jointly by statutory social services for the most vulnerable people who:

- are able to live in the community but who have a limited capacity for independence without a package of care, supervision and support.

The balance between our specific priorities and wider social inclusion objectives of housing related support will be reviewed in line with changes on Barnet's future Supporting People grant resources.