

## Managing Homelessness Without Housing

A new report published by the Scottish Council for Single Homeless (SCSH) shows that homelessness services in areas of Scotland where councils have transferred their housing stock have generally been an afterthought. The report 'Managing Homelessness without Housing' looks at the experience of four local authority areas in Scotland following stock transfer.

The findings of the report include:

- That with the exception of Argyll and Bute council, little attention was paid to how homelessness would be managed after the transfer.

- Stock transfer uncovered the true costs of managing homelessness, much of which had been included in the housing management costs of local authorities before transfer.

- There are significant weaknesses in monitoring what happens to homeless people in transfer authorities, with a confusion of formal and informal referrals.

- Stock transfer landlords tend to accept a higher proportion of homeless households than other housing associations and registered social landlords.

SCSH Chief Executive Robert Aldridge said: 'This important piece of research demonstrated clearly the importance of considering how



homelessness will be managed before stock transfer takes place. Of more concern is that funding for homelessness services post-transfer often relied on a combination of specific funding streams, such as Supporting People and Homelessness funding from the Scottish Government. Since April this year the ring fence has been removed from that funding, and it remains to be seen what impact it might have on funding for homelessness services.

*A summary of the report 'Managing Homelessness without Housing' is available at [www.scsch.org.uk](http://www.scsch.org.uk).*

*To order a copy of the full report go to [www.scsch.org.uk/information/publications.php](http://www.scsch.org.uk/information/publications.php) or email [enquiries@scsch.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@scsch.org.uk)*

## Youth Homelessness Statistics

The Joseph Rowntree Foundation has recently published findings from a UK wide study of youth homelessness. With significant policy developments across the UK to address youth homelessness over the last decade, the research explores whether they have been effective in tackling it.

The study included a review of available statistics and literature and six detailed case studies (Belfast, Edinburgh, Lambeth, Leicester, Sedgefield and Swansea), interviews, focus groups, consultation and roundtable events.

The research found that the numbers of young people accepted as homeless across the UK increased following the extension of priority need groups in the early 2000s. However, in the last few years levels have fallen. Numbers have reduced in England and Wales but have remained similar in Scotland and Northern Ireland. The annual rate of young people aged 16-24 accepted as homeless is highest in Scotland (approximately 15 people per 1,000 young people in the population).

Young men (aged 18 or over) are more likely to be non-statutorily homeless, whilst young women are more likely to be statutorily homeless. Statutorily homeless young people are very unlikely to

# What's New?

have an ethnic minority background in Scotland, Wales or Northern Ireland but are significantly over-represented in England, most particularly London.

The main 'trigger' for youth homelessness is relationship breakdown (usually with parents or step-parents) but young people experiencing disruption during childhood and/or from poor socio-economic backgrounds are at an increased risk of homelessness.

The research also found that young homeless people have much poorer health than other young people with depression, mental health and substance misuse issues being particularly widespread.

The review confirmed that there is a need for an improved evidence base on 'what works' in addressing youth homelessness. In addition, young people found it difficult to study or work and afford present (social and private) rent levels together with Housing Benefit restrictions and 'administration' complications.

The research also suggested that some groups of young people appear to have benefited to a greater extent than others from recent policy change. Evidence pointed towards a much more effective and coordinated response to meet the needs of young people aged 16 and 17, and those looked after by the local authority. Those aged between 18 and 24 were regarded to be in a comparatively worse position.

*The JRF findings can be downloaded at: [www.jrf.org.uk/knowledge/findings/housing/2221.asp](http://www.jrf.org.uk/knowledge/findings/housing/2221.asp)*

*For more information please contact Daniel Coote, Policy Officer, on 0131 226 4382 email [daniel@scsh.org.uk](mailto:daniel@scsh.org.uk)*

## Top Award for Link Living's Smart Move



*Smart Move's Peer Education Co-ordinator, Irene Blackburn, and the team of young peer educators receive an Investing In Volunteers Award from George Thomson, Chief Executive of Volunteer Development Scotland*

Smart Move, LinkLiving's Falkirk peer education project, has been presented with Investing In Volunteers (IIV) - a national quality standard recognising good practice in volunteer management.

The peer education project works with young people who have experienced housing crisis or homelessness and trains them to go into schools and youth projects to talk to other young people about their experiences.

Smart Move's dvd 'I wish I knew then what I know now' looks at the young volunteers' personal journeys out of housing crisis and is now available with an accompanying report documenting the project's impact.

The IIV award is based on four main areas: planning development, recruitment, matching volunteers, and supporting and retaining volunteers.

Irene Blackburn, Smart Move's Peer Education Co-ordinator explained: "LinkLiving set up Smart Move in response to seeing young people running into trouble after gaining a tenancy and also hearing the young people themselves tell us they wished they'd known more before leaping into a tenancy without being fully aware of what it involved.

"The project has gone from strength to strength during its first two years, not only advising many young people in the Falkirk area, but also helping the volunteers themselves to change their lives for the better.

"To achieve investing in volunteers status is fantastic."

*For further information on the Smart Move project, the dvd and report contact [enquiries@scsh.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@scsh.org.uk) tel 0131 226 4382*

## New Homelessness Statistics Published

The most recent Scottish Government Homelessness Statistics Bulletin was published on 22 April 2008. The Bulletin contains the latest information on applications and assessments to local authorities (LAs) under Scotland's Homeless Persons legislation for the quarters ending 30 June and 30 September 2007.

The publication is the first since the revision of the homelessness data collection which took effect on 1 April 2007. A number of LAs were unable to provide up to date data based on the implementation of the new system. Although any under-reporting has been adjusted by the inclusion of estimates, the Scottish Government has stressed the figures should be regarded as provisional.

During the period April to September 2007 the number of homeless applications dropped by 8% to 28,376 from 30,721 for

the same period in 2006. The number of applications assessed as homeless also dropped in this period from 28,694 in 2006 to 26,608 in 2007. Despite the drop in applications and assessments, SCSH has concerns about the extent of LAs progress towards meeting the 2009 interim target and the increasing number of households living in temporary accommodation.

By 31 March 2009 LAs should ensure they are half-way to the abolition of priority need by assessing 50% more applications in priority than in non-priority (determined from statistics used within the December 2005 Ministerial Statement). Of the 19,434 cases assessed as homeless for this period, 15,372 (79%) were assessed as in priority need. This represents an increase of 3% compared with the same period in 2006. However, there is a wide

variation across LA areas; according to 2006/07 HL1 statistics there are five local authorities who will require an additional 15% of their current non-priority homelessness assessments as priority assessments by 2008/09.

There has been a steady rise in the number of households living in temporary accommodation. On 31 December 2007, 8,633 households were in temporary accommodation, representing a 7% increase compared to figures for 31 December 2006. Of the households placed in temporary accommodation, almost a third were placed in B&B and hostel accommodation.

*To download this statistical release go to [www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/Doc/220795/0059389.pdf](http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/Doc/220795/0059389.pdf)*

*For more information on homelessness statistics please contact Daniel Coote, Policy Officer, on 0131 226 4382 email [daniel@scsh.org.uk](mailto:daniel@scsh.org.uk)*

## New Survey on Housing Associations' Support for Young Tenants

A recent survey into housing support for young people has revealed that a significant number of housing associations (HAs) in Scotland provide some form of tenancy support for their young tenants.

SCSH surveyed 198 HAs across Scotland, all members of the Scottish Federation of Housing Association, between February and April 2008.

The survey asked HAs if they had young tenants between the ages of 16 and 24 and, if so, what types of support were made available by the HA to help young people manage their tenancies successfully.

Many HAs did not have immediate access to statistics on the number of tenancies let to young people. HAs with available figures revealed that an average of 30% of total lets were made to young people aged 16-24 in 2007/2008 with most young tenants in the 18-24 age bracket.

Of the HAs surveyed, 10% reported working directly with young tenants to help them maintain their tenancies. One to one work with individual tenants is the most common form of support with 2% providing additional opportunities for young tenants to meet with others in a supportive environment.

**Web Links**

Links to all documents referred to in this issue of *inhouse*, and to back copies, can be found at our website [www.scsh.org.uk](http://www.scsh.org.uk)

A further 10% provide tenancy support through linking up with local voluntary services with 13% referring young people on to local authority agencies for support provided by social work and/or homeless teams.

A considerable number of HAs, approximately 10% of those surveyed, reported that they provided no form of tenancy support for their young tenants.

*A copy of the survey can be downloaded from [www.scsh.org.uk](http://www.scsh.org.uk)*



**SFHA Annual Conference**  
**Monday 9 - Tuesday 10 June 2008, Glasgow**  
Details at [www.sfha.co.uk](http://www.sfha.co.uk)



**Homelessness: four years and counting**  
**Monday 23 June 2008, Glasgow**  
Details at [www.shelter.org.uk/2012](http://www.shelter.org.uk/2012)



**Making the case for housing support**  
**Wednesday 25 June, Edinburgh**  
Details at [www.scsch.org.uk](http://www.scsch.org.uk)



**SHASC Conference**  
**Thursday 2 October 2008, Edinburgh**  
Details at [www.joa.co.uk](http://www.joa.co.uk)



**SCSH National Homelessness Conference**  
**Thursday 30 - Friday 31 October 2008, Edinburgh**  
Dates for your diary

## Making the case for housing support

**Wednesday 25 June, 2008**  
**Royal College of Physicians, Edinburgh**

The 'concordat' between the Scottish Government and local authorities removed the ring fence around supporting people funding. Local authorities now have greater freedom to decide how to spend that money, so there is no guarantee that housing support services will continue to receive the same level of funding.

How can housing support services make the best case to protect or increase their funding against competing priorities? What do we need to do to make an effective case?

### Who is this event for?

This event is essential for a wide range of homelessness staff in policy, commissioning, developmental and 'frontline' roles. It is particularly suited to those working for housing support services.



The programme will include:

**Housing Support Services and the Concordat**  
*Robert Aldridge, SCSH*

**Lessons from Supporting People Outcomes Pilot**  
*Stephen Sandham, Homelessness & Housing Support, Scottish Government*

**Implementing Outcomes Star**  
*Kate Jones, Solas (Wales)*

**Costs and Benefits of Homelessness Services: Examples and Approaches**  
*Colin Jones, Heriot Watt University*

Morning and afternoon workshop sessions will look at practical ways of making the case for housing support.

For a full programme and booking form go to [www.scsch.org.uk](http://www.scsch.org.uk)

SCSH is the membership body for organisations and individuals working to tackle homelessness in Scotland.

Full membership details are available on 0131 226 4382 or on our web site: [www.scsch.org.uk](http://www.scsch.org.uk)

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SCSCH is a charity registered in Scotland (SC002734) and a company limited by guarantee (company number SC77026).

### Mediation and Homelessness information online

Following SCSH's Mediation and Homelessness half-day practice sharing seminar on 16 May, 2008, the presentations and workshop sessions are now available online at [www.scsch.org.uk](http://www.scsch.org.uk)