

What is supported housing?

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Objectives

- 1.1 By the end of this chapter you will:
- Understand the diverse history of supported housing and its role in tackling social exclusion
 - Appreciate the extent to which funding has shaped the provision of housing and support
 - Understand what is meant by supported housing
 - Appreciate who supported housing is provided for, and who it is provided by
 - Understand the different types of supported housing and the difference between accommodation-based and non-accommodation-based services
 - Be familiar with the services (housing management, support and care) provided in supported housing

Overview

- 1.2 Supported housing is an umbrella term which is applied to a whole range of housing-based solutions for vulnerable people. These solutions have emerged over time and in response to pressing social needs to accommodate those who required support and care services, either to remain in the community or to overcome particular problems such as domestic violence.
- 1.3 This makes the definition of supported housing problematic. It has been defined in many different ways depending on who regulates, commissions, provides or uses the services. This chapter identifies some common strands of supported housing provision. We provide you with an idea of the scope of the sector and the range of provision, from privately or voluntary sector-managed schemes for people with learning disabilities through to local authority-managed floating support schemes. We begin the chapter by giving you a brief history of the sector. We consider the ways in which the need for, and availability of, funding and the changing philosophies on how best to provide for those with support needs influenced its development. We then consider the definition of supported housing, and describe the groups of people who require supported housing and the different ways in which it is provided. The chapter ends with an overview of the services that can be provided in supported housing.

History of the sector

- 1.4 What is surprising is the limited attention that historians and social policy analysts have paid to the growth of supported housing. To some extent this may be because, although it plays a significant role in working with marginalised groups across the welfare state, the sums invested in the sector are relatively small compared with mainstream health and social care services.

Pre 1900

- 1.5 The first recorded example of supported housing was Lady Edith Bisset of Wiggold, who in 1235 endowed a charity which provided housing for ‘two female lepers’ in Cirencester, and the oldest charity still in existence is thought to be the Hospital of St Oswald in Worcester, founded in around 990. Although many of those who currently provide housing with support can trace their roots back to the 19th century and the Victorian age (1837–1901), the focus at that time was to provide general needs housing for the labouring classes. Philanthropy (defined as practical benevolence, especially through large-scale charitable works) was prevalent in this era, and some current providers can trace their own links back to the 1800s. For example, the Peabody Trust, founded by George Peabody, and the Guinness Trust, founded by Sir Edward Guinness, still both provide general needs housing today. The purpose of housing provision at the time was to maintain a healthy, hard-working and, more importantly, disciplined workforce. Organisations did not provide housing for the masses, or support and care for those unable to provide for themselves.
- 1.6 Provision for those unable to care for themselves came from charitable or religious institutions. Provision was in large institutions such as asylums in which the ‘mad’ were locked up, workhouses for those unable to support themselves and homes for ‘fallen women’ (who became pregnant outside of marriage). The result was that those who were not able to stay in the community were subject to strict discipline and surveillance in specially designed institutions. This explains the fear and loathing with which many regarded such institutions.

The 20th century

- 1.7 The 20th century saw great changes in the provision of social welfare, including housing and support, although the development of social

housing did not fully embrace those with support needs until the latter part of the century. At the start of the century there was increased pressure on the state to provide social housing with the slogan 'homes fit for heroes'. This resulted in the first major piece of social housing legislation – the Housing and Town Planning Act 1919 (Addison Act). Local authorities were given a statutory duty to provide housing, with a central subsidy provided by central government. As the years went by, subsidies were either increased or cut, reflecting the housing policy of the time.

1.8 Housing associations continued to play an important role in housing, including housing for homeless people, the elderly and people with disabilities, although their contribution was small. Most housing associations were based in local communities, providing for very local needs. The increase in the number of housing associations resulted in the creation of the National Federation of Housing Societies in 1935 (now the National Housing Federation – NHF), a membership organisation that acts as a trade body for housing associations and promotes good practice in the provision of social housing. The Housing Act 1957 allowed local authorities to give mortgages to housing associations and the Housing Corporation was set up in 1964 to make loans to 'housing societies'.

1.9 For the majority of those who required support, institutional care continued, although an increase in state provision of such care followed the Beveridge Report in 1942 (*Social Insurance and Allied Services* Cmd 6404, HMSO), which laid the foundations of the welfare state. This introduced the idea that there would be state support for those who needed it 'from the cradle to the grave'.

The 1970s and 1980s

1.10 The significant increase in housing association provision in the 1970s was preceded by the 1966 TV docu-drama 'Cathy Come Home', which highlighted the plight of a homeless young mother. A number of large housing associations developed as a response to this, for example, Notting Hill Housing Trust. The Housing Act 1974 led to two significant changes in the provision of social and supported housing:

- 1 The framework of the housing association grant was created, enabling housing associations to apply capital funding to provide housing.
- 2 Housing associations were enabled to develop hostel schemes and

central government revenue funding for hostels became available through a grant called the hostel deficit grant (HDG).

- 1.11 The move away from institutional care to what has become known as community care had already begun for those with mental health problems, and in 1975 two government white papers were published – *Better Services for the Mentally Handicapped* and *Better Services for the Mentally Ill* – which cemented the shift from institutions to community-based support. This, along with the government’s 1981 Hostels Initiative, which replaced large homeless institutions (‘spikes’) with smaller community-based services, led to a growth in the number of shared supported housing services available to a range of client groups. In Box 1.1 we outline the key facts that contributed to the growth of supported housing.

Box 1.1 Key facts

Supported housing expanded considerably during the 1980s, mainly due to policy changes in two key areas:

- the closure of large institutions for people with mental health problems and learning disabilities; and
- government initiatives around housing homeless people.

- 1.12 The underlying philosophy of supported housing provision at that time was that services should be provided in small community settings rather than in large institutional settings. The belief remained that those with support needs were best accommodated in shared housing and that this provision was easier to manage with assumptions about efficient service delivery and concerns about allowing vulnerable people security of tenure. This was reinforced by the financial incentives or bias within the housing association and social security funding systems; funding from the Housing Corporation was only available for shared housing and welfare benefit entitlement meant that social service departments had a financial incentive to place people in private residential care.

The 1990s

- 1.13 The most significant piece of legislation in the 1990s was the NHS and Community Care Act 1990, implementing the government’s white paper *Caring for People*, which followed recommendations by Sir Roy Griffiths. As well as saving money, the principles behind the Act were about enabling people to live as normal a life as possible in their own

homes or in a homely environment in the community. The Act changed the revenue funding system for registered care homes, and from April 1993 local authority social services departments became responsible for organising and purchasing individual placements in residential care from a cash-limited budget.

1.14 In 1991, the funding framework for housing association supported housing changed and the hostel deficit grant was replaced by the special needs management allowance (SNMA). For the first time this grant was payable on self-contained as well as shared accommodation. Subsequently, SNMA was replaced by the supported housing management grant (SHMG) in 1995.

1.15 Attitudes also changed; self-contained housing was seen as a positive option for people with support needs. Schemes that were developed in the late 1990s were mainly self-contained and floating support schemes. Support was offered to those in their own homes and withdrawn when no longer required.

The 21st century

1.16 The fragmented and complex funding arrangements for supported housing were causing unease to the government. An Audit Commission report in 1998 on the role of housing in community care, *Home Alone*, identified at least 25 streams of funding being paid by four government departments. Developments outlined earlier in the chapter had happened in a piecemeal way, simply adding to the framework without comprehensive review. *Home Alone* also revealed that regulation was patchy, so public money was not adequately safeguarded and service users were not satisfied with the services they received. Around the same time there was concern about public protection following a series of high-profile incidents such as Christopher Clunis's fatal attack on Jonathon Zito. The results of the inquiry suggested that community solutions for people with mental health problems were not working.

1.17 The disquiet about funding became a crisis when a series of court decisions ruled that housing benefit should not pay for support within supported housing rents, potentially removing a much-needed stream of funding.

1.18 All of this culminated in a review of funding for the sector. The beginning of significant change began with a consultation paper, *Supporting People*, published by the Department of Social Security in November 1998. The resulting *Supporting People* programme introduced in April 2003 introduced a number of changes. It:

- 1 separated the funding for housing and support;
- 2 joined up a number of separate funding streams;
- 3 gave local authorities, through a joint commissioning body, control over the planning, funding and review of services; and
- 4 linked up *Supporting People* plans to wider community plans and other strategic priorities.

1.19 The programme has decoupled funding for housing costs from funding for support costs, so, in principle, there is no longer a tie between the kind of accommodation and type of tenure someone holds and their access to support services. Local authorities now administer the single ‘pot’ of monies that encompassed previous ‘legacy’ funding and monitor local services through the agreement with the service provider.

1.20 Although *Supporting People* enables the provision of support to people in their own homes (allowing for those with support needs to live in self-contained accommodation), shared housing has not disappeared. There is a legacy of provision developed in the 1980s and early 1990s still in use, and this model of provision may well be appropriate in some circumstances. It is important to maintain a range of housing and support solutions to meet the diverse needs of a range of client groups who find they need accommodation and support in many different circumstances; for example, temporary crisis accommodation in a women’s refuge may more appropriately be provided in shared accommodation. (Chapter 11 will discuss the *Supporting People* programme in more detail.)

1.21 We have suggested in this brief history that there has been a transition from a provision of supported housing funded by philanthropy and charity to one primarily funded by the state. This has been accompanied by a move from a paternalistic to an empowering philosophy of supported housing provision. The increased involvement of the state has brought increased regulation, and providers are expected to demonstrate that their outcomes promote independence and do not encourage service users’ dependence. The intensification of state attention has also led to reliance on the sector to deliver strategic functions. On 20 May 2006 Prime Minister Tony Blair wrote in a letter to Hilary Armstrong:

... In many areas of public service delivery, the third sector [an umbrella term for charities, voluntary and not for profit organisations] has the potential for better user focus, better reach and better outcomes than the state, both in terms of service quality for users and value for money for the taxpayer. [see www.number10.gov.uk]

We point you towards the Homelessness Code of Guidance for Local Authorities which guides local authorities on exercising their homelessness function. The code is an example of how the broad social role supported housing now plays in delivering a government strategic objective of social inclusion. The importance of the role of support providers in preventing and tackling homelessness is explicit in the code. Housing authorities are expected to *consider all the current activities that contribute to the provision of support for people in the district ... the range of providers ... are likely to embrace the public, private and voluntary sectors* (emphasis added).

Towards a definition

1.22 There is no generally agreed definition of supported housing. If you asked, say, five support workers for a definition, they would probably each give you a different one, which would reflect the environment within which they work. Generally, supported housing has been described as any housing scheme where housing, support and sometimes care services are provided as an integrated package. However, we feel that this is a limited definition because as it misses the essence of what the sector, its providers and its staff aim to achieve. We would add the following important elements:

- 1 Supported housing is a finite resource which is not generally available but limited to those who are vulnerable.
- 2 The purpose of support is to enable service users to live as independently as possible within their community.
- 3 Service users are empowered to become socially included in the wider sense of community participation.
- 4 The support provided varies and relates to the nature of the accommodation. For instance, women living in a refuge may receive support onsite by support workers, whereas people living in their own home may receive floating support within their own homes to enable them to sustain their accommodation

1.23 One problem within the supported housing sector is that there is no common language. Many terms appear to be interchangeable, and the way one provider uses a term may be different from another. This is not designed to shroud the sector with mystery, but is as a result of the somewhat disparate the way the sector has developed. We have attempted to use the most common understanding of terms, but it is always useful for practitioners to check other parties' understanding of

a term when it is used. In Box 1.2 we offer our brief definition of terms associated with supported housing.

Box 1.2 Explanation of terms

Service user – an individual who receives a supported housing service.

Client groups – a generic term which describes groups of people with certain types of support need who may be eligible for supported housing.

Provider – an organisation or individual who provides a supported housing service.

Support worker – our generic term for a member of staff who directly provides a support (and in some cases housing management) function to a service user.

Social housing – housing managed/developed by the local authority or not for profit organisation, usually housing associations for those in housing need, generally those on a low or limited income.

General needs housing – social housing which is not designed for a specific group requiring support. It represents the bulk of social housing.

Links with social housing

1.24 Many people associate supported housing with social housing, which is housing provided by local authorities, housing associations, voluntary agencies and charities. Supported housing is distinct from general needs social housing because:

- 1 There are higher staff levels than other forms of social housing because support and care services are provided in addition to housing management.
- 2 It is commonly arranged through partnerships between different organisations, including statutory sector bodies and voluntary sector organisations.
- 3 It is not confined to the 'not for profit' sector; companies and individuals manage schemes for those with support needs on a commercial basis.

Who is supported housing for?

- 1.25 Supported housing caters for a wide range of client groups with diverse needs, who require different levels of support in a range of accommodation models. If you have experience in the sector, you will know that service users do not neatly fall into categories, which in most cases are determined by funding requirements. Service users often have complex or multiple needs; for example, some people with mental health problems may also have substance misuse issues and may be homeless. In Box 1.3 we identify a range of service users who may require support.

Box 1.3 Groups of people who may require support

- 1 Older people with support needs.
- 2 Older people with mental health problems/dementia.
- 3 Frail elderly people.
- 4 People with mental health problems.
- 5 People with learning disabilities.
- 6 People with a physical or sensory disability.
- 7 Single homeless people with support needs.
- 8 People with alcohol problems.
- 9 People with drug problems.
- 10 Offenders or people at risk of offending.
- 11 Mentally disordered offenders.
- 13 Young people at risk.
- 14 Young people leaving care.
- 14 Women at risk of domestic violence.
- 15 People with HIV/AIDS.
- 16 Homeless families with support needs.
- 17 Refugees.
- 18 Teenage parents.
- 19 Rough sleepers.
- 20 Travellers.

This is an indication of the variety of needs met and not a definitive list. It is taken from definitions used in the *Supporting People* programme. The *Supporting People* programme is examined in more detail in chapter 11.

Types of supported housing

- 1.26 Changes in funding have led to an increased variety of housing provision as the sector has responded to different government initiatives. Whilst some types of provision can be used to accommodate groups with different needs, others are ‘client group’ specific. For example, hostels can specialise in the accommodation of young people, people with substance misuse issues or those at risk of offending, whereas women’s refuges will only accommodate women escaping domestic violence.
- 1.27 Supported housing is commonly divided into two basic types of provision:
- 1 accommodation-based projects where vulnerable people live in a specifically designated property to receive support services; and
 - 2 non-accommodation-based projects where vulnerable people can receive the necessary support services irrespective of where they are living.
- 1.28 Another important distinction between types of supported housing is that it can be permanent or temporary. Funding requirements usually mean providers have to designate schemes as either permanent or long stay or temporary stay.
- 1.29 Accommodation-based services can either be permanent or temporary.
- 1.30 Temporary simply means that there is no intention that the accommodation and/or support will be provided on a permanent basis. Funding requirements usually mean that the service user can be supported for up to two years. If permanent, the service user can be housed and supported for the longer term.
- 1.31 In non-accommodation-based services, the accommodation may be permanent, but the support can be provided on a temporary basis.

Accommodation based

- 1.32 There are several different types of accommodation-based projects:
- 1 Shared supported housing – a term commonly used in the sector to describe a temporary or permanent scheme where service users have their own room but share bathroom, kitchen and other communal areas with other service users. Support is delivered by staff who may have an office in the property or visit on a regular basis.

- 2 Self-contained supported housing – in which service users have their own flat or house. Sometimes it is sited in a block or cluster of the same type of provision and sometimes it is dispersed within a locality. Support is provided by staff who may have an office in the block or offer a visiting service.
- 3 Hostel – accommodation where a larger number of service users have their own rooms and share communal areas with other service users. Staffing is often provided on a 24-hour basis, seven days a week and in some cases meals are provided.
- 4 Bed and breakfast – temporary accommodation that is usually shared and provided by the local authority or on its behalf. The accommodation is provided for homeless people awaiting a decision as to whether the local authority will offer to house them under its statutory homeless duties. Support is not always provided, but it has become increasingly common.
- 5 Women’s refuge – temporary accommodation for women (and their children) who have experienced domestic violence. Women often share a room with their children and share other communal areas with other women and their families. Support is provided by workers, sometimes 24 hours a day, seven days a week.
- 6 Adult placements – long and short term accommodation with care/support provided for the service user in the personal (usually family) home of a provider. This term can also be used to describe non-accommodation based services such as day services, befriending or support in the community.
- 7 Housing for older people (sometimes called sheltered) – accommodation that is specifically for older people, usually over 55, and predominately in self-contained houses or flats. The support is provided by a warden, who may live on the site, or support staff who visit the property. Some schemes are designated ‘extra care’ where meals and care may be provided in addition to support.
- 8 Residential care home – can be temporary or permanent accommodation registered under the Care Standards Act 2000 to provide accommodation, support and personal care to service users. Service users usually have their own room and share communal areas; however, some newer homes have private as well as communal cooking and washing facilities. Support and care are provided by workers 24 hours a day, seven days a week.
- 9 Foyer for Young People – temporary accommodation for young people (usually aged 17–25 years) with support and access to employment training and education. The accommodation may be

shared or self-contained. Support is provided by staff, who have usually have an office on site and may be available 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

- 10 Teenage parent accommodation – temporary accommodation specifically for young people (usually aged 17–21 years) who have become, or are about to become, parents. Service users often share a room with their babies and share kitchen, bathroom and communal areas with other service users. Support is provided by support workers who have an office on site.
- 11 Almshouses – permanent, usually self-contained, accommodation often targeted at the older poor of a locality or those from certain categories of employment. The accommodation is generally managed by a charity or the trustees of a bequest.
- 12 Shared ownership (now Homebuy) schemes – permanent self-contained accommodation where the service user buys part of the equity of the property (for example, 70 per cent). Leasehold schemes for the elderly (LSE) may provide support when the service user requires it and the support worker will be located in an office nearby.
- 13 Supported lodgings – similar to adult placements. An individual rents out rooms in their home and provides support to a service user with support needs; commonly used to house young people. The service user will have their own room but share bathroom, kitchen and other communal areas with the lodgings provider, who also provides the support.

Non-accommodation based

- 1.33 The following arrangements exist when the accommodation may not be designated as supported housing. Housing-related support will be provided, so they fall under the umbrella of supported housing:
 - 1 Floating support services – support that is provided, usually on a temporary basis, to service users by a visiting support worker to enable the service user to sustain their tenancy and remain in their home.
 - 2 Resettlement services – support services that enable people who have lived in supported or temporary accommodation to effect a successful transition to a permanent home and sustain their accommodation.
 - 3 Outreach services – usually an accommodation-based scheme

providing support services to service users in the community. This service is usually on a less formal basis than floating support running advice session or surgeries.

- 4 Community/alarm services – usually associated with older people, where an alarm is provided for emergency use in the service users' home. Support services are thus provided when needed to enable service users to stay in their own home.
- 5 Home improvement services – schemes that are designed to support service users in acquiring the aids and adaptation they require to stay in their own home.

Who provides supported housing?

1.34 In order to understand the 'make up' of the sector it is useful to describe the types of organisations and individuals providing supported housing.

- 1 Housing associations – are 'not for profit' bodies governed by a voluntary board that provide low cost housing for people in housing need. Housing associations fall into two groups; those registered with the Housing Corporation and usually funded by it (referred to as registered social landlords or RSLs) and those that are not registered. Those who remain unregistered are either part of the voluntary sector or profit-making bodies. RSLs manage the majority of supported housing, either directly or via partnerships with voluntary and statutory agencies. RSLs provide a wide range of provision including hostels, shared or self-contained supported housing, leasehold schemes for the elderly, home improvements, floating support and in some circumstances registered care homes. The majority of RSLs manage general needs housing and supported housing. There are a small number of specialist housing associations that only provide supported housing, for example, Centrepoint is an RSL that provides housing and support services for young homeless people.
- 2 Local authorities – provide supported housing in their locality either directly or in partnership with a voluntary agency or RSL. Local authorities are the second largest provider of supported housing due to the number of schemes they manage for people with learning disabilities and older people. They provide a wide range of supported housing, including hostels, supported housing and a large number of sheltered schemes. Local authorities also provide bed and break-

fast accommodation or temporary housing associated with their duties to homeless people.

- 3 Voluntary agencies/organisations – not for profit organisations that provide services for the public good. Their activities are governed by a board or committee of volunteers. Voluntary organisations manage a wide range of supported housing, including hostels, supported housing, women’s refuges, teenage parents and foyers, often in partnership with RSLs and local authorities.
- 4 Charities – are voluntary ‘not for profit’ organisations that provide services for the public good. Most charities are registered with the Charity Commission and the majority of RSLs and voluntary organisations are also registered charities. Charities are also called voluntary agencies, although some organisations prefer to refer to themselves as charities, for example, almshouses managed by the charitable trustees of a bequest.
- 5 Private companies – are organisations set up to make a profit out of their activities. Private companies manage bed and breakfast, registered care homes, hostels and supported housing.
- 6 Private individuals – are members of the public who are paid to provide supported housing. It is usually one person or a family who provide support services by managing an adult placement or supported lodgings.
- 7 National Health Service – the NHS as a government department works in partnership with or funds RSLs, agencies and private companies and individuals to provide supported housing. Health trusts as local agencies responsible for health services also work in partnership with these bodies and manage provision directly. Their provision includes supported housing and care homes, where care is provided as one of the services.

1.35 Collectively RSLs, voluntary organisations and charities are referred to, particularly by government, as the ‘third sector’, the first sector being the state and the second sector being the private sector. The increasing importance of ‘third sector’ organisations has been recognised by government, which launched the Office of the Third Sector in May 2006. In Box 1.4 we outline the role of the Office of the Third Sector.

Box 1.4 Office of the Third Sector

The Office of the Third Sector was set up to formalise the government’s role in supporting voluntary and community organisations and charities, amongst others. It works as an advocate for

the third sector and works across government with departments, for example, the Department of Communities and Local Government. The Office of the Third Sector conducted a review of the third sector to inform the 2007 spending review.

See www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/third_sector.

What services are provided?

- 1.36 Supported housing is characterised by the provision of support and, in some circumstances, care, as well as accommodation and housing management services. There are no clear boundaries between these services, and this can present difficulties where those who fund a particular activity want to ensure that workers are not delivering services that should be paid for by another funding body. Support workers can find this confusing, as unsustainable distinctions are drawn up between care and support or other services. In many parts of the country, commissioners are moving towards aligning different funding streams and jointly commissioning services to deliver agreed outcomes. The next section offers a broad outline of the different categories of service based on the expected outcome, and examples of the activities required to achieve them.

Housing management

- 1.37 The aim of housing management services is to ensure that the property is safe, maintained and well managed. Housing management activities take place in both supported and general needs accommodation. These activities include carrying out repairs, ensuring that the property conforms to health and safety requirements, collecting rent, dealing with rent arrears, neighbour disputes and tenant participation, managing voids and lettings and taking legal action if a user does not keep to the terms of their occupancy agreement. In general needs social housing the staff responsible for housing management are usually called housing officers. A number of RSLs and local authorities have separated some housing management functions, creating income recovery officers who collect rent arrears and community involvement officers who ensure tenant participation. Most local authorities and RSLs have a separate maintenance function, although in some cases the first point of contact may be the housing officer.

Support

- 1.38 Support services are provided to enable a service user to live independently or sustain their capacity to do so. Support services can include assistance with budgeting and welfare benefits, enabling access to training, education or employment, development of living skills, support to manage a tenancy or licence agreement, giving general emotional support and empowering the user to access leisure activities, social networks and achieve social inclusion. Front line staff who provide these services are generally described as support workers, support officers, project workers or key workers.
- 1.39 It is common for support and housing management to be provided by the same organisation, although, since the introduction of the *Supporting People* funding regime, separate delivery of the two services has increased. This change is often prompted by the decisions of those who commission services or business decisions about the best way to deliver these services.
- 1.40 This has led to two main models of service delivery:
- 1 The same member of staff provides both services – staff can be referred to as supported housing officers, but also key workers, support workers, support officers or project workers.
 - 2 The housing management and support functions are split between two members of staff, who are sometimes located in different teams/departments within the same organisation or different organisations. Commonly the housing management service is delivered by a housing officer or supported housing officer and the support service by the support worker, key worker, tenancy sustainment worker or even floating support worker.
- 1.41 There is a debate in the sector as to whether it is better for housing management and support to be provided by the same or different workers. One view is that a worker expected to provide both services experiences a conflict of interest. One moment they wear the 'landlord's hat', serving a warning letter for rent arrears, and the next they wear the 'support worker hat', aiming to support the user to manage the arrears. The concern is that the relationship of trust built up by providing support is negated by enforcing the landlord role. This is why some landlords have separated housing management and support into different teams or departments. The opposite viewpoint is that providing both services enables workers to take a 'holistic' view of the service user, understanding, for example, that they have fallen into rent arrears due to their substance misuse issues. It is sometimes very difficult to

separate housing management and support services in some services, for example, women's refuges and hostels. The separation of housing management and support relies on good communication between the two workers.

- 1.42 In some cases the housing management and support are delivered by different organisations. For example, in a young persons' scheme, the building may be owned and managed by a housing association and the housing management function provided by their general needs housing officers. The support is provided by a voluntary agency which specialises in working with young people, and staff may be called support workers or key workers.
- 1.43 In floating support schemes, people living in general needs housing requiring support may receive services delivered by a floating support worker or a tenancy sustainment worker, and the housing management function continues to be provided separately by the landlord. Floating support workers will work with a service user for a period of time, which is defined by the service user's needs. When support is no longer required the support service 'floats off' to support another service user in another property.

Care

- 1.44 Care services are usually associated with health or social care; for example, the prevention, treatment and management of physical and mental illness and the preservation of mental and physical wellbeing. In the context of supported housing, it includes social care duties that fall within the remit of social services. Care services include assistance with personal care to the user, for example, washing, feeding and taking them to the toilet, administering medication, changing dressings and cooking and shopping for them. In supported housing a member of staff who provides care services is usually called a care worker.
- 1.45 It is not uncommon for a scheme to provide housing management, support and care with one worker providing all three services and known as a support worker, key worker, project worker or scheme worker. The current funding regime means that such a scheme would attract separate funding streams to provide all three services.

Summary

- 1.46 The chapter provides you with an understanding of the term supported housing and how provision has developed over time. We believe that by understanding the history of the sector you will appreciate current provision and the potential tensions in that provision. We have provided you with key themes to enable you to come to your own understanding of supported housing. It may be useful for you to look up some of the sector's definitions. We discuss the Housing Corporation definition of supported housing in chapter 10 and the *Supporting People* definition of support which we consider in chapter 11. Whilst considering the range of people who benefit from the provision of supported housing, we have tried to acknowledge that service users do not fall into neat categories or boxes. We have outlined the main types of accommodation and non-accommodation-based services and furnished you with details of the most common type of provider. Lastly, we have attempted to explore the housing management, support and care services that can make up supported housing services. We hope you are able to identify your own scheme within our account and understand that the work you do contributes to a much wider sector.

