



Planning for the Future 2011-2013

Supporting People
supporting independence



Introduction

Supporting People is a Welsh Assembly Government funded programme that exerts its influence into many different aspects of people's lives. It is primarily a means of supporting vulnerable people to maintain their independence with particular attention to helping people to remain in their accommodation.

The programme impacts on council strategies such as the Living Environment, Health, Social Care and Well-Being and Education for life.

It delivers savings to health, social care, and the criminal justice system by preventing the development of crisis situations and allows the most vulnerable in our society to access and maintain a home.

The programme focuses on achieving positive outcomes with people in respect of their health, safety, financial well-being and their inclusion and participation within the community.

The planning of the programme is closely linked to both the objectives and aims contained in the Health and Social Care and Well Being Strategy and the Children and Young Peoples Partnership.

The programme is administered by the Caerphilly Supporting People team that contract with over forty statutory, voluntary and private sector agencies for the provision of support.

The supporting people team ensures that the support is directed at those in greatest need and that the quality of support is of a high standard and meets the needs of the vulnerable people receiving the service.

Total supporting people expenditure within Caerphilly is over £6.5m and the programme employs over 300 staff supporting in excess of 5,000 vulnerable people.

At a time when public finances are increasingly under pressure there is even more of an impetus to demonstrate 'value for money' and evidence the contribution of the programme to the strategic aims of the local authority and its partners.

Research based on data collated by Experian, a global information services company, shows the "resilience rankings" of Welsh local authority areas - essentially how vulnerable places are to cuts in public spending, Caerphilly is 20th out of 22 and therefore more than ever will need services to protect the vulnerable.

In this updated 'Planning for the future' document, we look at the contribution of the supporting people programme to the key areas that influence our lives and give practical examples of how our services operate and identify where we need to develop further services to meet gaps in need.

Housing

The supporting people programme supports vulnerable people in many types of accommodation, this ranges from those living in the public and private rented sectors through to owner-occupiers

Our support providers operate in refuges, hostels, youth supported living projects and specialist schemes for people with learning disabilities and mental health problems.

We also support sheltered and extra care schemes and finance much of the community alarm service (telecare). Lastly there are the floating support services where support workers call to people homes to give them support.

The support we offer is non judgemental, practical in nature and may vary from ensuring that a person is receiving their full benefit entitlement, to advice on healthy living, to assisting in access to appropriate accommodation for their needs.



What's happening in Caerphilly?

Caerphilly continues to identify the need for further specialist schemes that are needed to meet the needs of vulnerable people, there is plan to provide a short term supported family accommodation in Caerphilly in the next 18 months, together with an extra care scheme opening it's doors in November 2010.

Park View, an eight bed supported housing project for people who have suffered substance misuse problems opened in December 2009.

We are seeking to avoid placing young people in bed and breakfast whilst we look for suitable alternative accommodation and two supported housing schemes comprising 15 units of support will open in the next 18-24 months.

Social Housing Grant, which is needed to build such schemes, is being reduced and therefore there is a continuing need to evidence why this capital funding needs to be allocated for the provision of supported housing.

In addition there is a lack of suitable single person accommodation and future new building projects need to ensure that single people are fairly catered for.



Health

Many of the people who receive supporting people service also have associated health problems; ill health is often a contributory factor to people finding themselves experiencing difficulties in their lives

Many of our services are for older people and they often have the onset of health problems, our services can give early indication of potential health issues with individuals and assist in ensuring that vulnerable people receive regular health checks.

Caerphilly has historically had a high level of long term debilitating illness and the demographic projections for increasing numbers of elderly people means that services for older people will need to be better planned and more responsive to the needs of the citizen

Health problems are not limited to the elderly, many homeless applicants do not have access to GP's or dentist and need to learn responsibility in terms of their sexual health.

Where people do need hospitalisation, then the programme is able to facilitate their early release from hospital and work in unison with health and care services to ensure that sufficient support is available to facilitate their release from hospital

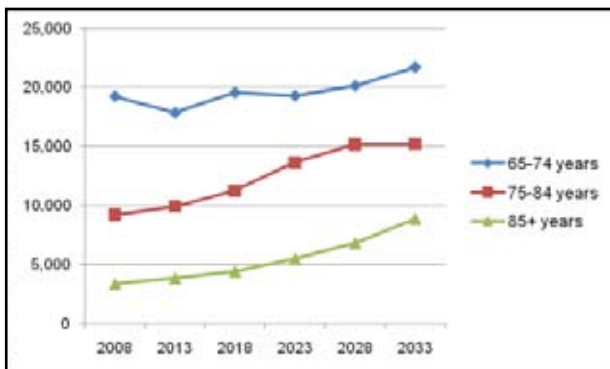
What's happening in Caerphilly?

Some of the statistics from the 'Caerphilly Health Social Care and Well Being Strategy 2011-2014'

- Conception rates in under 18 year olds in Caerphilly borough are higher than the average for Wales;
- Based on self-reported data, 62% of the adult population in the borough can be categorised as overweight or obese;
- 26% of adults in Caerphilly county borough smoke. The Wales average is (24%);
- 28% of adults were categorised as binge drinking (drinking more than twice the daily recommended amount) on any one day in the previous week;
- Caerphilly borough ranked 18th in Wales, with 11% of adults reporting being treated for a mental illness compared with 9% for Wales as a whole;
- In Caerphilly borough, 26.3% have a limiting long-term illness, the fifth highest proportion in Wales. Within the borough, the highest proportions were in the north.



One major factor that will impact upon the need for support services is that whilst the majority of age groups (children and adults) are projected to remain fairly constant up to 2033, the 65+ population is projected to increase, as shown in the chart below:



Caerphilly Supporting people team are collecting information on the health outcomes that are achieved by our providers, we want to know about the instances where hospitalisation was avoided and safety measures agreed to stop the frail from hurting themselves in falls.

We want to know about how we can improve access to service users for general practitioners, dentists, chiropodist and nursing staff and how are services can complement the 'Frailty Programme'.

We continue to examine how our services can we help people with mental health issues or conditions such as dementia remain in the community and avoid institutionalised care.

“We need to seek to ensure that the maintenance of individuals health is core to support delivery and that services reflect the changing demographics of the county borough”

Social Care (Adult Services)

Social Care has traditionally tried to protect vulnerable people by placing them in registered settings, these often prove to be both expensive and an unnecessarily restrictive tenure for people.

The supporting People programme offers the alternative to the residential and nursing homes, in options such as extra care and sheltered housing and in commissioning projects such as floating support services for older people that allow them to remain in their homes longer.

The services provided by supporting people can help identify necessary adaptations or assistive technology and can ensure that adequate support is provided to ensure people's safety

Part of the service offered is also to assist in access to benefits and grants and thereby help people to afford the care they need to maintain their independence and not be reliant on local authority funded services.

What's happening in Caerphilly?

Recently commissioned services include a sensory impairment service with 'Sight Support' and a much-expanded floating support service for older people delivered by 'Reach'.

Alternatives to the traditional group models of living for people with learning disabilities are being explored and a dvd highlighting the accommodation options available has been jointly produced by ourselves and Caerphilly People's First.

A low-level mental health service has been commissioned to augment our larger floating support service delivered by Gofal Cymru.

"We need examine the options in respect of more joint commissioning with social care to ensure that services are holistic and seamless to service users"



Social Care (Children and Young Person Services)

Local authorities often provide a place of refuge and protection for young people, at some point these young people need to move into society and it is the supporting people programme that funds the schemes that allow for a gradual introduction to living alone through supported living schemes and support in their first tenancies.

It is not just young people within the leaving care system that need to be supported, there are increasing numbers of young people who for a variety of reasons find themselves in difficulty, often with no family or peer support to call on.

What's happening in Caerphilly?

Services such as mediation are reporting increasing numbers of young people accessing their services and table one below shows the slightly increased number of 16/17 years olds being accepted as unintentionally homeless by the local authority,

Table 1 - Single young people for whom decisions were taken during the year 2009/2010 – WHO 12.

2009/2010	Female		Male		2009/ 2010	2008/ 2009
	16/17	18-24	16/17	18-24	16/17 year old	16/17 Year old
Eligible, unintentionally homeless and in priority need	10	45	16	20	26	25
					Total 2009/ 10	Total 2008/09
Eligible, homeless and in a priority need, but intentionally so	0	3	0	4	7	9
Eligible, homeless but not in priority need	-----	8	-----	12	20	15
Eligible, but not homeless	7	32	6	15	60	59
Total decisions	17	88	22	51		

Services such as mediation are reporting increasing numbers of young people We want to look at alternatives to resolving difficulties being experienced by young people, these include mediation services and the establishment of short term supported lodgings for young people to access, whilst, mediation attempts to resolve their problems.

We are still placing young people in bed and breakfast and we have commissioned a larger floating support service that will ensure that young people are supported in all forms of temporary accommodation and that we look at developing alternatives to placing young people in bed and breakfast.

A small young mothers project has been established that allow young mothers to develop both parenting and independent living skills before taking up a tenancy.

“We need more supported schemes for young people, reduce our usage of bed and breakfast and improve access and affordability of single person accommodation”



Community Safety

Keeping people safe and secure is one of the principal tenets of the programme and protection from violence is core for women fleeing domestic violence.

We support women's Aid refuges and floating support services that allow women to remain in their homes or settle them into a new home elsewhere.

Our services work with individuals and families that exhibit anti social behaviour and work to break the pattern of lack of respect for neighbours and society.

Often this means working with the whole family including the children to promote the alternatives to life on benefits and crime.

The supporting people programme also works positively with the perpetrators of crime following release from prison to seek to contribute to rehabilitative programmes instituted by probation or youth offending teams.

What's happening in Caerphilly?

Caerphilly has four refuges with 16 units and also has a floating support services that helps people remaining their homes or settle elsewhere, discussions are now ongoing with Llamau to designate one of the refuges as 24hr support and to look at expanding the floating support services and looking at identifying a number of properties as temporary accommodation for families who cannot be catered for in the be refuges.

Caerphilly supporting people has commissioned the first substance misuse supported accommodation scheme and has expanded the Gwalia Ffynon project which provides support for substance misusers in their home.

Specialist schemes such as the Arms and Popos projects deliver support to high risk and prolific offenders ensuring both safety to the community and helping people to resettle and rehabilitate themselves.

"We need to review and expand our services for people fleeing domestic violence, ex offenders and those who misuse substances "



Qualifications, Training and Employment

It's well recorded that the south Wales Valleys have one of the highest rates of youth homelessness in Britain, The supporting people programme is not just about putting a roof over someone's head. It about giving people hope and a helping hand in accessing further skills, qualification and experience that will give them a future to look forward to.

We are interested in learning how providers can develop the basic skills of people; help them into voluntary work and job creation schemes.

What's happening in Caerphilly?

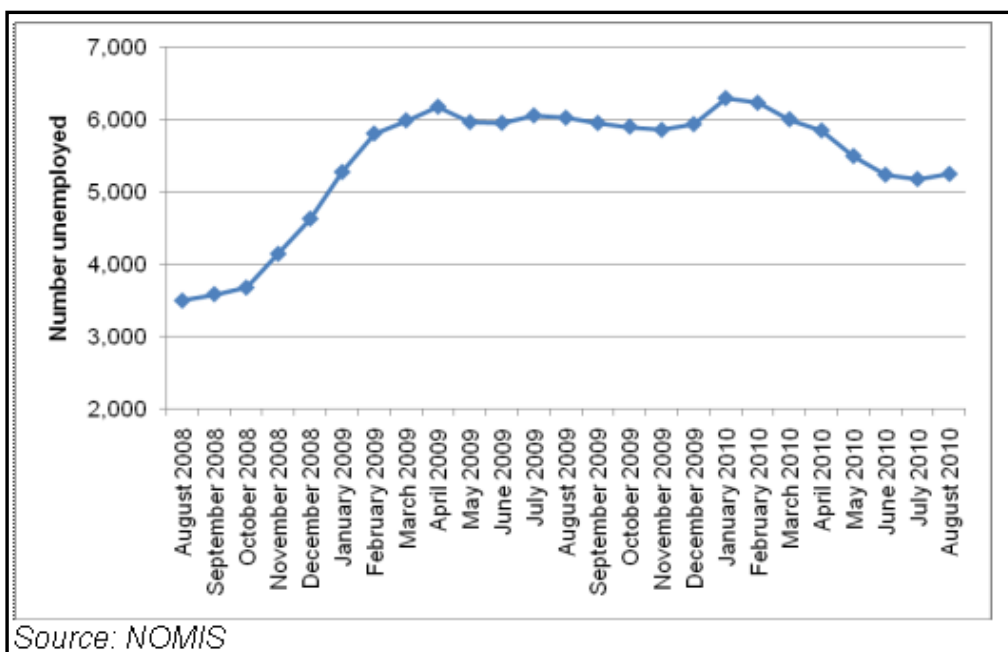
We are working with the agencies we fund for them to record positive outcomes in terms of training and employment.

Schemes such as 'Learning for Life' and 'Compass' are contributing to assist those not in employment, Education and training.

Unemployment in the county borough has risen from 3,494 in August 2008 to a high of 6,294 in January 2010, but has since fallen to 5,247 by August 2010, a fairly similar figure to the previous two months. This figure equates to a residence based unemployment rate amongst 16-64 years olds of 4.8%, which is higher than the rate for Wales as a whole of 3.7% for August 2010.



Caerphilly Overall unemployment figures



Source: NOMIS

Poverty

Increasingly in times of financial restrictions it is more important than ever that people have access to all the benefits to which they are entitled, we require that our providers are fully conversant with the benefits available for all groups of people and assist them in making suitable applications.

Child poverty has been identified by Welsh Assembly Government has one of the principal areas that needs to be improved within Wales and supporting people programmes within Caerphilly often compliment those funded by Cymorth

In Wales today, there are approximately 200,000 children living in poverty. Just under half of these children live in families where at least one of the adults is in paid work.

Children and young people growing up in poverty are vulnerable in a number of different ways. We know they are more at risk of poor health, poor educational attainment, have lower skills and aspirations – and are more likely to be low paid, unemployed and welfare dependent in adulthood.



What's happening in Caerphilly?

Where people are experiencing debt or arrears then our support workers will assist in formulating a plan of repayment to avoid repossession or the serving of eviction notices.

Where families are not accessing all their benefits or are not effectively managing their income, then we will seek to assist them in.

We will be seeking to contribute to the aims outlined in the Welsh Assembly government Child Poverty Strategy:

- Reducing numbers of families in temporary accommodation and those in overcrowded accommodation;
- Improvements in Housing Benefit administration and take up;
- Ensure that children and young people receive high quality care and support – and drive forward improvements in the delivery of services focused on the needs of the child or young person;
- To ensure that all children grow up in decent housing;
- To ensure that all children grow up in safe and cohesive communities.

“We need to contribute to the strategic objectives, aims and key policy priorities contained within the Child Poverty Strategy for Wales”



The Future

The future remains uncertain, an independent review of the supporting people programme is about to announce its recommendation to Welsh Assembly Government and the Central Governments review of spending could also have a detrimental effect on the future of the programme.

Constraints on expenditure could lead to difficulty in accessing homeless services in cities and thereby exacerbate the homeless situation within Caerphilly.

There is a need to move away from bed and breakfast and build up a supply of temporary supported accommodation and facilitate access by single people into the private rented sector.

We need more supported accommodation for the young for those with mental health issues.

Newly commissioned services need to be more flexible and holistic, there is a need for services to be jointly commissioned by health, social care and supporting people that will allow for greater cooperation and less gaps for people to fall through.

We need to link our telecare services into the mainstream services to assist those who are frail and vulnerable and to keep people in their homes and out of hospital for as long as possible.

Alternatives to nursing and residential care need to be explored and the existing sheltered stock reviewed to best meet future needs.

We need to work collaboratively with

neighbouring authorities to realise the benefits of jointly commissioning schemes for transient vulnerable client groups and schemes of a more specialist nature.

Lastly, we need to realise the benefits the low level preventative services generate for statutory services and ensure that financial plans currently being devised take a long term strategic view of the place of supporting people services in the overall provision of services for vulnerable people.



Notes