

Shelter Scotland Housing Support Service

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Service provided by:
Shelter Scotland

Service provider number:
SP2004005554

Care service number:
CS2004081160

About the service

Shelter Scotland provides a housing support service to people who are homeless in Dumfries and Galloway and families who are homeless in South Lanarkshire. They offer practical and emotional support to help people settle into a permanent tenancy and sustain their home. Each person/family has a support worker who works with them to decide what they need and want support with. At the time of our inspection around one hundred and twenty people were using the service, ninety people in Dumfries and Galloway and thirty families in South Lanarkshire.

Shelter Scotland believes that everyone needs a home in a place where they can thrive. They aim to provide practical support and innovative solutions for anyone who is homeless or who has a housing problem.

What people told us

We received questionnaires from seven people using the South Lanarkshire service and five people using the Dumfries and Galloway service. They all agreed, eleven of the twelve strongly agreeing, they were happy with the quality of support they got from the service. Comments included:

- "Very helpful and helped us a lot. Very positive".
- "Invaluable support".
- "I would be lost without support from Shelter. I would probably be dead without them".

We met four people using the Dumfries service and spoke to one by phone. They were all very happy with the support and their support workers. They told us about the positive changes they'd made as a result of support.

We met two families using the South Lanarkshire service and spoke to three by phone. They were all very positive about the service and felt the support had made a real difference for their family.

Self assessment

We are not asking services to provide self assessments this year while we review how we inspect services in future.

From this inspection we graded this service as:

Quality of care and support	6 - Excellent
Quality of staffing	6 - Excellent
Quality of management and leadership	not assessed

What the service does well

People and families made positive changes that improved their quality of life. They secured permanent housing, sorted their finances, improved their physical and mental health, reduced alcohol and drug dependence and improved relationships with family, friends and other services. They also felt safer, more confident and better about themselves.

The service used "Outcomes Star" very well. People decided the changes they needed and wanted to make, what they could do to make those changes and what support they needed. They redid their "Star" regularly and saw the progress they were making.

Staff were excellent at being alongside people so they could use other services, not just practical services, like housing, citizens advice and furniture services, but also services people found it more difficult to engage with, like social work, mental health services and women's aid. People felt they got the right level of support to be able to do things for themselves. People really appreciated that staff go the "extra mile" to make a real difference. "She's done far more than I expected".

People felt very confident in their support worker and said that anyone in the team would help. Many people said they found it difficult to trust but trusted their Shelter worker. They commented:

- "I can trust (name). People have promised things in the past and let me down. I don't feel like that with (name)."
- "I find it difficult to trust. I can trust (name). I can talk to her about things and know she won't be telling lots of people."

Staff tried different ways to engage with people to establish a relationship that worked.

The service retained very experienced, knowledgeable and motivated staff who really wanted to make a difference for people they support. Staff felt valued, listened to and well supported by their manager and colleagues. They had interesting and relevant learning opportunities to support their development. Staff commented, "I enjoy my workplace and I am proud to work in a project that is service user focused, meets the needs of the individual, staff and partner agencies."

The service recruited staff safely and made sure new staff showed the values and behaviours needed. Managers chose staff who would "fit" with the team and bring added skills and experience. A person the service supported was involved in recent interviews. People could feel confident in the quality of new staff.

The service was always looking for ways to improve. The Dumfries service had developed volunteering opportunities so people had meaningful things to do and could "give back". They planned to make sure they were as accessible to lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) people as possible. The South Lanarkshire service had developed a peer support group, with the women really taking control of what the group did. They were working with the local authority to pilot "housing first for families".

What the service could do better

The service's development plans were informal. People could feel more confident that the services are continuously improving if they developed more formal improvement plans.

We suggested the service could look at how people could have more of a say about the staff supporting them.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Complaints

There have been no complaints upheld since the last inspection. Details of any older upheld complaints are published at www.careinspectorate.com.

Inspection and grading history

Date	Type	Gradings
6 May 2015	Announced (short notice)	Care and support 6 - Excellent Environment Not assessed Staffing 5 - Very good Management and leadership 6 - Excellent
21 Nov 2013	Announced (short notice)	Care and support 6 - Excellent Environment Not assessed Staffing 5 - Very good Management and leadership 6 - Excellent
23 Dec 2011	Announced	Care and support 5 - Very good Environment Not assessed Staffing Not assessed Management and leadership 5 - Very good
4 Feb 2009		Care and support 5 - Very good Environment Not assessed Staffing 4 - Good Management and leadership 4 - Good

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