Addressing antisocial behaviour

An independent evaluation of Shelter Inclusion Project

Shelter

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Executive summary

Shelter Inclusion Project represents a new approach to tackling antisocial behaviour and social exclusion. The scheme was launched in 2002 in partnership with Rochdale Metropolitan Borough Council. The project was designed to provide an alternative model to present enforcement policies and residential schemes by offering a specialist floating support service to help households identify and deal with the causes of their behaviour and learn how to resolve their situations.

Antisocial behaviour is at the top of the Government's policy agenda. A raft of initiatives has focused on enforcement, but newer policy approaches, such as the Government's Respect Action Plan, include an emphasis on family support and rehabilitation. Shelter Inclusion Project illustrates how meeting the support needs of households involved in antisocial acts can impact positively on their behaviour and reduce the risk of homelessness and social exclusion. An independent evaluation of the pilot model, funded by the Housing Corporation and undertaken by the Centre for Housing Policy, University of York, found that:

- the project succeeded in ending or improving antisocial behaviour in seven out of ten households that had completed their time with the project. Among the 45 'closed case' households, 60 per cent no longer exhibited any antisocial behaviour. A further 11 per cent were reported as showing improvements in their behaviour.

- high levels of tenancy sustainment were achieved, with 84 per cent of closed cases assessed as no longer being at risk of homelessness following contact with the project.

- there was a high level of service engagement, with users accepting targeted work to address antisocial behaviour. Most service users reported that the project had made a significant difference to their lives, helping them to regain confidence, control and self-respect.

Profile of service users

Over its three-year duration, the project supported 74 households containing a total of 230 individuals. The households had been subject to a total of 149 actions for antisocial behaviour, including written and verbal warnings, eviction, injunctions and Anti-social Behaviour Orders. The most common antisocial acts were noise and youth nuisance.

The majority of the households, 67 per cent, contained children. Lone parent households formed the most common type of household at 43 per cent. However, in 70 per cent of cases, antisocial behaviour was being committed only by an adult in the household.

The households were almost all economically inactive at the point of referral. Only three per cent of the service users were in work. Nearly half (45 per cent) were carers for dependent children.

Children were often experiencing disruption to their education, including truanting and exclusion, at the point of referral. Twenty-four per cent of the children were either temporarily or permanently excluded, or missing significant amounts of school.

Many households had high levels of self-reported health and support needs. More than half the households contained an adult with depression and other mental health problems. Just under one third of the households contained someone with a limiting illness or disability. Drug and alcohol dependency among adults was a problem in 23 per cent of the households.

Delivering a support service

The project provided a wide range of support that was flexible enough to be developed and extended in response to service users' needs.

The support not only targeted specific acts of antisocial behaviour, but also met wider needs that might cause stress and lead to problem behaviour.

Households were advised, for example, on practical issues such as debt management or claiming benefits. They were helped to access education or training, and received advice on managing stress or depression. A number of adult service users who received help with parenting skills described how this support had helped them control their children and helped them feel better in themselves.

Direct work with children and young people was also an integral part of the project, and was a particularly highly valued aspect of the service. The importance of work with older young people had been recognised by the appointment of new staff to support this age group.

Where necessary, project workers helped families access other support services and made referrals to other agencies. More generally, the project developed good inter-agency working with landlords, enforcement agencies and voluntary sector providers.

A floating support model meant that workers could assist households with planned moves and continue to support them in their new accommodation.

Shelter Inclusion Project outcomes

Antisocial behaviour had ended or improved in seven out of ten households that had completed their time with the project. Among the 45 'closed case' households, 60 per cent no longer exhibited any antisocial behaviour. A further 11 per cent were reported as showing improvements in their behaviour.

The scheme also had a positive impact on tenancy sustainment, with 84 per cent of closed cases assessed as no longer being at risk of homelessness following contact with Shelter Inclusion Project.

A small number of adults experienced an improvement in their economic status while with the project, not necessarily as a direct result of the project's interventions, although increased self-esteem clearly played a part in enabling people to re-engage with the labour market. Almost 50 per cent of the closed case households were reported as making progress with money management.

Shelter Inclusion Project helped to re-engage marginalised children and young people with education. Of the 34 children and young people who received direct support with their education, 91 per cent showed improvements in school attendance.

Service users reported that the project had made a significant difference to their lives. Many said it had stopped them from being evicted and most felt they were managing to address antisocial behaviour issues, through feeling more in control of their lives.

Costs and cost consequences

The total income and expenditure for the project per year was approximately £300,000. The main income sources were Supporting People and the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund.

It is estimated that antisocial behaviour costs £3.4bn a year in England and Wales. The loss of tenancies because of antisocial behaviour costs up to £9,500 per household.

Shelter Inclusion Project's average total cost for each household was around £9,000 (approximately £2,700–£3,400 per individual member). The scheme can therefore be considered good value for money.

In the longer term, not preventing antisocial behaviour has very high costs to society in terms of increased homelessness, health problems, social exclusion, educational underachievement and unemployment.

Conclusion

Shelter Inclusion Project is a unique and cost-effective model to combat antisocial behaviour.

It has had considerable success in tackling antisocial behaviour and has also promoted social inclusion and community stability by helping households live successfully in their communities.

There was a high level of tenancy sustainment and significantly reduced levels of antisocial behaviour as a result of the project.

Overall the project met its aims and objectives to a very good extent, with service users engaging with the project and accepting targeted work to address antisocial behaviour within a supportive, no-blame culture.

Many service users said the project had helped them regain confidence, control and self-respect.

1 Introduction to Shelter Inclusion Project

In 2002, Shelter and Rochdale Metropolitan Borough Council established a three-year pilot project, Shelter Inclusion Project, to test a new approach to addressing antisocial behaviour and social exclusion. The project was designed to provide an alternative model to enforcement policies and residential schemes, by offering a specialist floating support service to address antisocial behaviour issues associated with support needs and also to reduce the risk of homelessness. An independent evaluation of the pilot model was commissioned, funded by the Housing Corporation and undertaken by the Centre for Housing Policy, University of York.

Policy context

Antisocial behaviour[1] has been a major area of concern for governments and housing and community managers since the mid 1990s. Despite the introduction of a raft of measures to tackle the problem in recent years,[2] antisocial behaviour remains high on the policy agenda and continues to be regarded as a widespread problem in all parts of the UK, affecting individuals, communities and whole estates and areas.

At the time of writing, the Government had announced further measures to tackle antisocial behaviour. The Respect Action Plan (2006) contained a number of measures designed to address the root causes of antisocial behaviour, including a roll-out of intensive family support schemes. The Plan found that 'intensive, tailored action, with supervision and clear sanctions, can be effective in improving the behaviour of the most problematic households.'

Other measures announced in the Plan include:

- A consultation on introducing a house closure order that would close down and seal properties that have been the focus of constant antisocial behaviour for a set period, regardless of tenure.

- A Respect Standard for housing management which will, among other provisions, seek to make a direct link between housing enforcement powers and provision of support and rehabilitation projects.

- Extension of the agencies that have the power to enter into parenting contracts and orders.

- A consultation on financial sanctions for people who have been evicted for antisocial behaviour and then refuse to take up offers of help. Sanctions could include financial penalties or Housing Benefit measures.

- Extra money for parenting classes and support groups for parents who find it difficult to control bad behaviour at home, along with a national parenting academy to train support workers in advising parents.

- More power for local communities to demand action by councils and police to deal with troublemakers.

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1. Although the term 'antisocial behaviour' is widely used, it is ill defined and there is no agreed definition of the problem. See, for example, Dewar and Payne (2003); Nixon et al (2003); Bannister and Scott (2000) and SEU (2000).
2. These previous measures are reviewed in the second interim report on Shelter Inclusion Project: Jones, A., Pleace, N. and Quilgars, D. (2005) *Shelter Inclusion Project: Two years on*, London: Shelter (www.shelter.org.uk).

Current initiatives to tackle antisocial behaviour

There is a wide range of initiatives and measures designed to tackle antisocial behaviour but these have tended to focus on enforcement and, to a lesser degree, the prevention of antisocial behaviour rather than on the resettlement and rehabilitation of perpetrators.[3] Some social landlords have adopted a hard-line approach to antisocial behaviour, for example, using introductory tenancies for all new tenants and taking action in all cases of antisocial behaviour. Those evicted for antisocial behaviour are deemed intentionally homeless and are thus excluded from the housing register (Goulding, undated). As the SEU (2000) has noted, eviction alone will not stop antisocial behaviour but simply displaces the problem.

The first service in the UK developed specifically to work with perpetrators of antisocial behaviour was the NCH's Dundee Families Project, which became operational in 1997 (Dillane et al, 2001). Research conducted by Sheffield Hallam University[4] for the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) identified seven projects developed specifically to work with perpetrators of antisocial behaviour (apart from Shelter Inclusion Project) in 2004. These projects are all based in the North of England and provide support to families with children, making Shelter Inclusion Project the only current known intervention working with single people and couples as well as households with children.

Causes of antisocial behaviour

Research on antisocial behaviour has tended to focus on measures to deal with the problem. The causes of antisocial behaviour are less well understood. Those studies that have considered the characteristics of perpetrators (Brown et al, 2003; Dillane et al, 2001; Nixon et al, 2000; SEU, 2000) found that perpetrators

of antisocial behaviour are often vulnerable and usually poor. Many have mental health problems and community care needs and may themselves be victims of antisocial behaviour.

Although antisocial behaviour is not tenure specific it tends to be associated with wider social exclusion and problems such as poverty, family stress, community disorganisation, drug dependency, and truancy and school exclusion (SEU, 2000). One in five landlords associated antisocial behaviour with single women tenants, or more specifically, with their children and visiting male friends (Nixon et al, 2003). Women are particularly vulnerable to losing their homes because of the antisocial behaviour of their children and/or visitors (Hunter and Nixon, 2001).

Shelter Inclusion Project

Shelter and Rochdale Metropolitan Borough Council developed Shelter Inclusion Project to test a new approach to addressing antisocial behaviour and social exclusion. The project aimed:

- to reduce antisocial behaviour

- to promote social inclusion and community stability

- to prevent eviction and provide a route back into settled housing.

While many initiatives have addressed enforcement issues, in many instances evidence from Shelter's housing services showed that behaviour deemed antisocial is the result of unmet support needs. The service was therefore set up to work with households who had difficulty in complying with the terms of their tenancy agreements. It aimed to provide assessments and packages of support to address issues that might make households vulnerable to eviction and social exclusion.

The project employs a project manager, four support staff (two full time and two half

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3. At the time of writing the Government had just announced plans to establish a national network of intensive family support schemes for perpetrators of antisocial behaviour.
4. An interim report of the findings has been published: http://www.odpm.gov.uk/pub/41/ Interimevaluationofrehabilitationprojectsforfamiliesatriskoflosingtheirhomesasab_id1163041.pdf

time), a children and youth worker team leader, two children and young persons workers (job share), an administrator (part time) and an office assistant. The manager does not carry a caseload. The project manager line manages the support workers, the team leader and the administrator, while the team leader supervises the work of the children and young persons workers and the office assistant.

The project worked with up to 33 households at a time for an average of 12 months. The staff: user ratio was approximately 1:10-11. The project was able to work with up to 26 young people at any one time. Most households were allocated a support worker and a children's worker where appropriate. From its inception, the service was based in a central location in Rochdale; however, it worked mainly with people in their own homes.

The project provided a wide range of support, focusing on preventing antisocial behaviour, both by addressing specific aspects of individual behaviour as well as meeting wider needs that could impact on antisocial behaviour. Support included help with managing bills, money and debts, help with managing stress and depression as well as practical help around the home such as with decorating or managing the garden. Where appropriate, children's workers gave support to the household, for example liaising with schools over attendance problems and providing support with parenting skills. The support packages provided were flexible in order to meet the specific needs of the service users. See Section 3 for more details of the support provided.

The project was able to work with households living in any tenure, including the private rented and owner-occupied sectors. But given that key referral partners operated in the social sector (see Section 2), most households were living in the social rented sector.[5]

The 74 households with which the project worked over the course of the evaluation period tended to be characterised by social and economic exclusion and by quite high levels of self-reported health and support needs. Almost two-thirds of households (57 per cent) contained an adult with self-reported mental health problems, the most common of which was depression. Just under one third of the households contained someone with a limiting illness or disability (28 per cent). Twenty-three per cent of households contained someone who was drug and/or alcohol dependent.

Behavioural problems, including mental health problems, were quite commonly reported among children in the households (18 per cent of children were reported by a parent as having these needs). One in five households containing children reported being in contact with social services at referral to Shelter Inclusion Project. Just under a quarter of the children were experiencing more severe problems at school or were absent from school (24 per cent) at the point of their referral to the project.

The antisocial behaviour in which households were involved at referral was most likely to be either noise nuisance (38 per cent of all adults) or youth nuisance (25 per cent of all children and young people). Neighbour disputes involving adults (26 per cent) were also quite common. Some households were unable to keep visitors under control (14 per cent). This included women who found it difficult to bar entry to an abusive former partner and vulnerable lone adults who exercised little control over who entered their home. Around one in eight adults (12 per cent) and a slightly lower proportion of children (eight per cent) were involved in criminal activity at referral. This sometimes involved serious crime, including arson, violence, theft and drug dealing.

5. In addition, the project was in large part funded by Transitional Housing Benefit in 2002, meaning that only social tenants could qualify for the service until Supporting People was introduced in April 2003.

Referrals to Shelter Inclusion Project

During the period of the pilot, Shelter Inclusion Project operated a broad referral policy. The main criteria for referral were that:

- households were homeless or faced homelessness in the near future

- households had a history of antisocial behaviour

- households were willing to engage with the service.

Beyond this, the project was able to accept referrals for:

- any type of household (eg single people, families, etc)

- households living in any tenure (social and private rented sector, and owner-occupied[6])

- people of all ages, including children and young people.

Preference was given to households with a history of homelessness and households consisting of people who had complex needs. For the first half of the pilot, Shelter Inclusion Project worked on an agency referral basis, but for the second half of the pilot, and onwards, the project changed its referral process to include self-referrals.

Staff, service user and agency views of the referral procedures are discussed in Section 3.

The evaluation

The independent evaluation of Shelter Inclusion Project was commissioned by Shelter in 2002 to assess the project's development over its pilot period. The overall aim of the research was to evaluate whether the project met its stated aims and objectives. In addition, the evaluation assessed the extent to which the project:

- helped households address antisocial behaviour

- assisted households to maintain tenancies and avoid homelessness

- resettled households that had experienced homelessness as a result of their antisocial behaviour

- impacted positively on service users, agencies and the wider community.

The evaluation followed the service's progress over two and a half years (April 2003 to September 2005). A multi-method approach was used, including detailed monitoring of referrals, interviews with service users (both adults and children) and key stakeholders, tracking cases and assessing cost effectiveness (Appendix A outlines the research methodology in more detail). Two interim reports were produced in 2003 and 2004.[7] This report presents the findings from the full evaluation.

Section 2 presents a statistical profile of service users. **Section 3** reviews the referral procedures and the support services provided, through the views and experiences of service users, staff and key agencies. **Section 4** discusses the outcomes of Shelter Inclusion Project. An assessment of the cost-effectiveness of the project is presented in **Section 5**. Finally, **Section 6** draws conclusions on the success of the Shelter pilot model for addressing antisocial behaviour.

6. As noted before, only social tenants qualified for the service in the first year until Supporting People funding replaced Transitional Housing Benefit in April 2003
7. The second interim report, and summary reports of both interim reports, are available on Shelter's website: www.shelter.org.uk

2 Referrals to Shelter Inclusion Project: profile of users

This section uses project monitoring information to present a statistical profile of service users.[8]

Key findings

- Households containing children predominated among service users (67 per cent). Lone parent households were the single most common household type (43 per cent).

- The 74 households supported by the project over the three year period had been subject to 149 actions for antisocial behaviour at the point of their referral. Households had most commonly been subject to one or more written warnings (62 per cent) or verbal warnings (59 per cent). Some were subject to eviction procedures, injunctions and Anti-social Behaviour Orders (ASBOs).

- In 70 per cent of cases, antisocial behaviour was being committed only by an adult (or adults) in a household.

- The most common forms of antisocial behaviour in which households were involved were noise and youth nuisance. However, a minority of households were also involved in serious crime.

- Just over half the households reported being subject to antisocial behaviour from their neighbours at referral. Neighbour disputes were the most common form of antisocial behaviour to which households claimed they were subject.

- More than half the households contained an adult with depression (57 per cent). Drug and alcohol dependency among adults was quite common (23 per cent of households). Children were less likely to have health related care or support needs, but asthma and behavioural problems were reported. Eighteen households had been characterised as particularly vulnerable because of complex support needs.

- The households were almost all economically inactive at the point of referral. Only three per cent of the key service users were in work. Nearly half (45 per cent) were carers for dependent children.

- Children were quite often experiencing disruption to their education at referral. Twenty-four per cent of children were either temporarily or permanently excluded, or missing significant amounts of school.

- Child protection concerns were recorded for fifteen households, and in six cases, children had been placed on the child protection risk register following the project's intervention.

Over the period from the project's inception to 30 June 2005, records were available on a total of 74 households who had been referred and accepted to the project. As at 30 June 2005, these records included 45 closed cases (ie households that had ceased to use the service) and 29 open cases (ie households still receiving the service).

Table 2.1 shows the main referral sources. The majority of households were referred by Rochdale Boroughwide Housing. Referrals also came from a wide range of other community services.

8. Appendix A provides further details on research methods.

Table 2.1: Sources of referral to Shelter Inclusion Project

	Number of households	Percentage
Rochdale Boroughwide Housing	49	66%
Bowlee Park Housing Association	11	15%
Guinness Trust Housing Association	3	4%
St Vincent's Housing Association	1	1%
Ashiana Housing Association	1	1%
Riverside Housing Association	1	1%
Community Drugs Team Outreach Service	1	1%
Police	1	1%
Health Visitor	1	1%
Stepping Stone Project	1	1%
Petrus Outreach	1	1%
Self referral by service user	1	1%
Not recorded	2	3%
Total	**74**	**100%**

Base: 74 households. Percentages are rounded.

A profile of the households referred to Shelter Inclusion Project

The 74 Shelter Inclusion Project households contained 230 individuals, 98 of whom were adults and 132 of whom were children or dependent teenagers. The largest single group was lone parent families, representing 43 per cent of households **(Table 2.2)**. The next largest group was lone adults (28 per cent of households). A quarter of households contained a couple with children or an extended family (24 per cent).

Among the children and dependent teenagers, males outnumbered females (58 per cent compared with 42 per cent). Among the adults, women outnumbered men substantially (there were 2.5 times as many adult women as adult men among those working with the project). Women were much more likely to be heading lone parent households than men (**Table 2.3**).

Table 2.4 shows the age of the children at the point at which their household started to receive support from Shelter Inclusion Project. Boys predominated in the age range 1–4 and were the majority of those aged 5–9 and 16–19. Girls outnumbered boys in the 10–15 age range.

Table 2.2: The types of household in which service users lived

Household type	Percentage of households	Average size of households
Lone adult	28%	1 person
Adults sharing*	5%	2 people
Lone parent	43%	4 people (including children)
Adults & children**	24%	5 people (including children)

Base: 74 households. Percentages are rounded.
*Including couples **Including extended families.
Note: 16- to 17-year-olds living with their parent or parents are classified as children, as are 18-year-olds in full time education.

Table 2.3: The types of household in which service users lived, by gender

Household type	Men	Women	Boys/Male young people	Girls/Female young people	Total
Lone adult	7	14	0	0	**21**
Adults sharing*	3	4	0	0	**7**
Lone parent	2	30	48	33	**113**
Adults & children**	16	22	29	22	**89**
Total	**28**	**70**	**77**	**55**	**230**

Base: 74 households.
*Including couples **Including extended families (a couple living with their children and other adult relatives).
Note: 16- to 17-year-olds living with their parent or parents are classified as children, as are 18-year-olds in full time education.

Table 2.4: The ages of the children in the households

Age group	Males	Percentage	Females	Percentage	Total
Under one year	2	50%	2	50%	**4**
1–4	19	73%	7	27%	**26**
5–9	23	56%	18	44%	**41**
10–15	15	42%	21	58%	**36**
16–18	7	58%	5	42%	**12**
Total	**66**	**55%**	**53**	**45%**	**119**

Note: Information on ages was not available for 13 children.
Percentages are rounded.

Table 2.5: The ages of the adults in the households

Age group	Males	Percentage	Females	Percentage	Total
19–21	6	50%	6	50%	**12**
22–29	3	19%	13	81%	**16**
30–39	9	26%	26	74%	**35**
40–49	3	30%	7	70%	**10**
50–59	2	33%	4	67%	**6**
60–69	2	50%	2	50%	**4**
Total	**25**	**30%**	**58**	**70%**	**83**

Note: Information on ages was not available for 15 adults.
Percentages are rounded.

Table 2.6: Economic status of key service users at referral

	Number	Percentage
Carer for dependent children	33	45%
Unemployed and claiming benefit	22	30%
Unable to work for health reasons	14	19%
Other (not economically active)	3	4%
In part time work	2	3%
Total	**74**	**100%**

Percentages are rounded.

Table 2.5 shows the ages of the adults in the households. The largest single group was women aged between 30 and 39.

Only one adult was from a Black or Minority Ethnic (BME) group; the others were of White British origin. Social landlords working with high numbers of people with a BME origin made referrals to Shelter Inclusion Project, but the households they referred in all but one case contained people of White British origin.

The households were almost all economically inactive at the point of referral. **Table 2.6** shows the socioeconomic status of the key service users (person in a household around whom the service was organised) at referral.

A small number of adults was claiming Incapacity Benefit or other benefits related to disability or long term limiting health problems. Most households were claiming Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA) or Income Support, Housing Benefit[9] and Child Benefit.

Debt was quite widespread among the households at the point of referral to Shelter Inclusion Project. A quarter of the households had one debt, while 38 per cent of households were reported as having two or more debts.[10] Forty per cent of the households had a Social Fund budgeting loan and another 25 per cent had a Social Fund crisis loan. Rent arrears with their current landlord were reported among 20 per cent of households.

Risks to housing at referral

Eighty-nine per cent of the households were described as being at risk of losing their housing when they were referred to Shelter Inclusion Project. **Table 2.7** shows the main risks that households were reported as facing. Just over a third of the households had received one or more written warnings about antisocial behaviour which constituted a risk to their housing (35 per cent). Another ten households were in the process of being evicted for antisocial behaviour at referral. It should be noted (see **Figure 2.1**) that households could be subject to written or verbal warnings while at the same time facing other threats to their housing associated with antisocial behaviour and from their support needs. Verbal and written warnings could also sometimes be minor, a general caution to watch behaviour rather than a specific warning that a tenancy was in jeopardy. **Table 2.7** only records the main risks and does not detail the entire range of risks a given household might have been facing.

Initially, Shelter Inclusion Project worked on the basis that referrals arrived at the point at which formal warnings had been issued because of antisocial behaviour. As time passed, referring landlords began to see potential for the project to undertake a preventative role. Consequently, in the second half of the pilot, referrals began to arrive before action for antisocial behaviour

9. Until Supporting People funding was introduced in April 2003, only people on Housing Benefit could be referred to the project.
10. A debt was defined as owed money. Payments were not necessarily overdue on these loans, although active recovery of rent arrears and recharges (recovery of repair costs) was underway by landlords.

Table 2.7: Main risks to current housing at referral

	Percentage of households
Written warning(s)	35%
Other forms of risk*	18%
Notice of Seeking Possession served	13%
Verbal warning(s)	12%
Not at immediate risk (early referral)	11%
Statutorily homeless (awaiting rehousing)	8%
Awaiting homelessness decision	1%

Base: 74 households. Percentages are rounded.
*Risks to tenancy sustainment linked to households' needs, characteristics and experiences, which existed alongside issues with antisocial behaviour.

had been taken. This accounted for the 11 per cent of households that were not described as currently facing risks to their housing at referral.

Although most faced risks to their housing, many of the households had been in their current home for some time. Three in ten households had been resident in their current home for less than one year and a few households were actually homeless at the point of referral. Another 24 households (34 per cent) had been in their current home for between two and five years. A quarter of the households (26 per cent) had been in their home for more than five years at referral.

Experience of prior homelessness at referral

At the point of referral to Shelter Inclusion Project, twenty-eight households (38 per cent) reported having been homeless at least once before. Eleven of these had been homeless more than once, representing 15 per cent of the 74 households with which the Project worked. These findings show a history of housing instability among a significant minority of households.

Housing situation at referral

Almost all the households were living in social housing provided by Rochdale Boroughwide Housing or a housing association. Just one household lived in the private rented sector at referral. Households generally reported that the standard of their accommodation was acceptable but many were unhappy with the area they were living in. Some of these areas had very poor reputations within Rochdale Borough, with respect to the perceived levels of crime and antisocial behaviour. In the 2004 English Indices of Multiple Deprivation, calculated by the Office for National Statistics, Rochdale Borough was ranked as the twenty-fifth most deprived of the 354 local authorities in England (source: ONS).

Half the households reported 'trouble from teenagers' in their area. A third (30 per cent) reported 'lots of crime' and another 30 per cent 'lots of drugs' in their area. 'Lots of vandalism' was reported by a fifth of the households. Only 19 per cent reported that they were 'happy with the area' in which they lived, and just 10 per cent reported that they 'felt quite safe' in their area.

Antisocial behaviour at referral

Table 2.8 shows which groups of people were involved in antisocial behaviour within the households. In 70 per cent of cases, the antisocial behaviour in a household was being committed solely by an adult or adults. Two-thirds of the children and young people in the households (72 per cent) were not reported as being involved in any form of antisocial behaviour at referral. Only in a minority of cases were children and young people the sole perpetrators of

Table 2.8: Patterns of involvement in antisocial behaviour

Who is involved in antisocial behaviour?	Percentage of households
Adults only	70%
Adults, young people and/or children	18%
Children and young people only	12%
Total	**100%**

Base: 74 households. Percentages are rounded.

antisocial behaviour with the adult or adults in the household not being involved (12 per cent). In almost one in five households, both adults and children or young people in the same household were involved in antisocial behaviour (18 per cent).

Table 2.9 shows the types of antisocial behaviour households were involved in. The most common forms were noise nuisance (38 per cent of all adults) and youth nuisance (25 per cent of all children and young people). Neighbour disputes involving adults (26 per cent) were also quite common. Some households were unable to keep visitors under control (14

per cent). This included women who found it difficult to bar entry to an abusive former partner and vulnerable lone adults who exercised little control over who entered their home. A few households were reported as being involved in more than one form of antisocial behaviour.

Around one in eight adults (12 per cent) and a slightly lower proportion of children (eight per cent) were involved in criminal activity at referral. This sometimes involved serious crime, including arson, violence, theft and drug dealing.[11]

Table 2.9: Adult and child involvement in different types of antisocial behaviour

Type of antisocial behaviour	Percentage of all adults involved	Percentage of all children involved
Noise	38%	5%
Neighbour disputes	26%	9%
Garden not maintained	16%	None
Visitors causing problems	14%	None
Youth nuisance	11% (parent held accountable)	25%
Internal property damage	11%	3%
Criminal activity	12%	8%
Vandalism	3%	8%
Hoarding rubbish	4%	None

Base: 98 adults and 132 children. Percentages are rounded.

11. For ethical and legal reasons, it was not possible for the evaluation team to have sight of detailed information on the offences committed by these household members.

The actions being taken against households for antisocial behaviour at referral

The 74 households had collectively been subject to 149 actions for antisocial behaviour at referral. **Figure 2.1** shows the percentage of households that had been subject to the different types of action. Households had most commonly been subject to one or more written warnings (62 per cent) or one or more verbal warnings (59 per cent). Thirteen per cent of households were threatened with eviction for antisocial behaviour and eight per cent had been issued with one or more ASBOs.

As **Table 2.10** shows, the majority of actions taken against households as a result of antisocial behaviour were against adults (67 per cent of all actions). A further 15 per cent of actions were taken against at least one adult and at least one child or young person in the same household. The remaining 17 per cent of actions were all taken against children or young people alone.

Antisocial behaviour to which the households were subject at referral

Just over half of the 74 households reported that they were victims as well as perpetrators of antisocial behaviour at referral (57 per cent). The most common form of antisocial behaviour which households complained they were subject to were neighbour disputes (32 per cent). When interviewed, service users

Figure 2.1: Actions for antisocial behaviour to which households had been subject at referral

Written warning	62
Verbal warning	59
Eviction	13
Anti-social Behaviour Order	8
Exclusion from Housing Register	8
Acceptable Behaviour Contract	8
Injunction	7
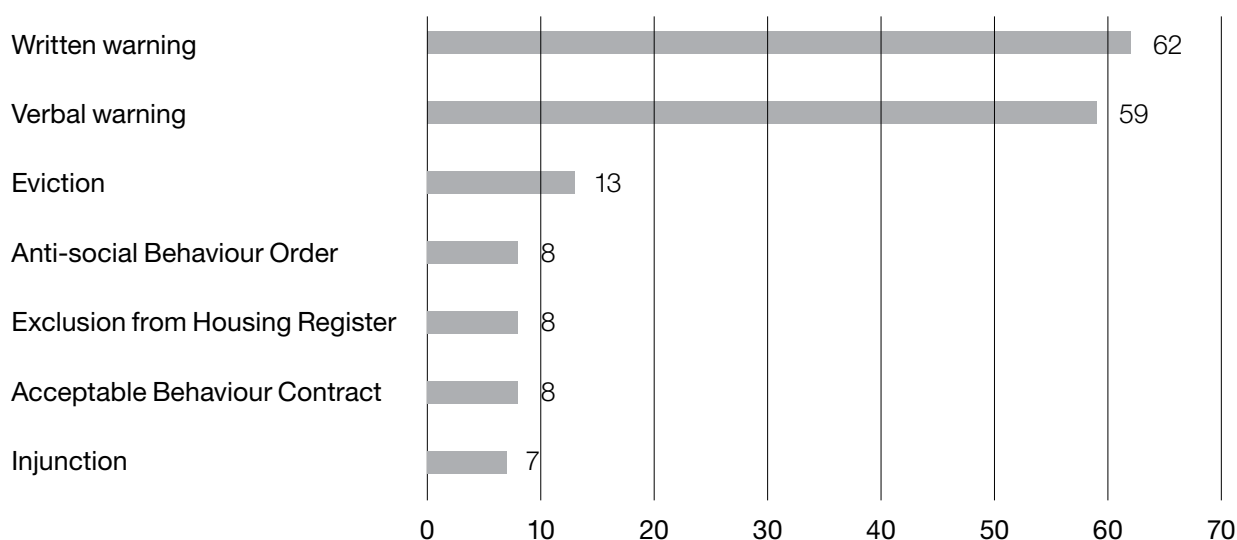
Base: 74 households

Table 2.10: Actions for antisocial behaviour by person(s) subject to those actions

Person(s) subject	Number of actions	Percentage of all actions
One adult in a household	79	53%
More than one adult in a household	21	14%
Adults and young people or children in a household	23	15%
One child or young person in a household	18	12%
More than one child or young person in a household	8	5%
Total number of actions taken against 74 households	**149**	**100%**

Percentages are rounded.

sometimes claimed that their antisocial behaviour was an exaggeration or deceit by hostile neighbours who were the 'real' perpetrators of antisocial behaviour.

Other reported antisocial behaviour against the households included youth nuisance (22 per cent) and being subject to criminal activity from people in neighbouring households (16 per cent). Nine households (12 per cent) reported being subject to visitors' antisocial behaviour. This could cover a range of issues. For example, in a few cases, the 'visitor' was a violent male former partner. In other cases, poor gate-keeping skills among some vulnerable people meant disruptive individuals gained access to people's homes. This issue was seen as one of the most time consuming and difficult problems by project workers.

Support needs of households on referral

As is shown in **Figure 2.2**, depression and other mental health problems were the most commonly self-reported health problems among adults, with more than half the households containing an adult with self-reported depression at referral. Just over a quarter of the households self-reported that they contained an adult with a limiting illness or disability. Self-reported

drug and alcohol dependency among adults were also quite common, with one in four households containing an adult who was drug and/or alcohol dependent.

Despite high levels of self-reported health problems, 49 of the households (66 per cent) had no contact with support or care providers at referral. Only eight of the 42 households reporting depression or other mental health problems were in contact with mental health services. Contact with social services was more unusual for lone adults (10 per cent). Ten of the 74 households were in contact with drug and alcohol services, although the proportion was higher among lone adults. Contact with Probation services was quite unusual among the adults (five per cent).

In 2004, the project established a 'vulnerability' register for households who were considered to have high and/or complex support needs. Eighteen households were recorded, representing nearly a quarter (24 per cent) of all households.[12] Most of the eighteen households had multiple support needs and were vulnerable for more than one reason. In particular, these households were likely to have a risk of violence (11 cases) or financial abuse from other

Figure 2.2: Presence of self-reported health-related support needs (percentage of households)
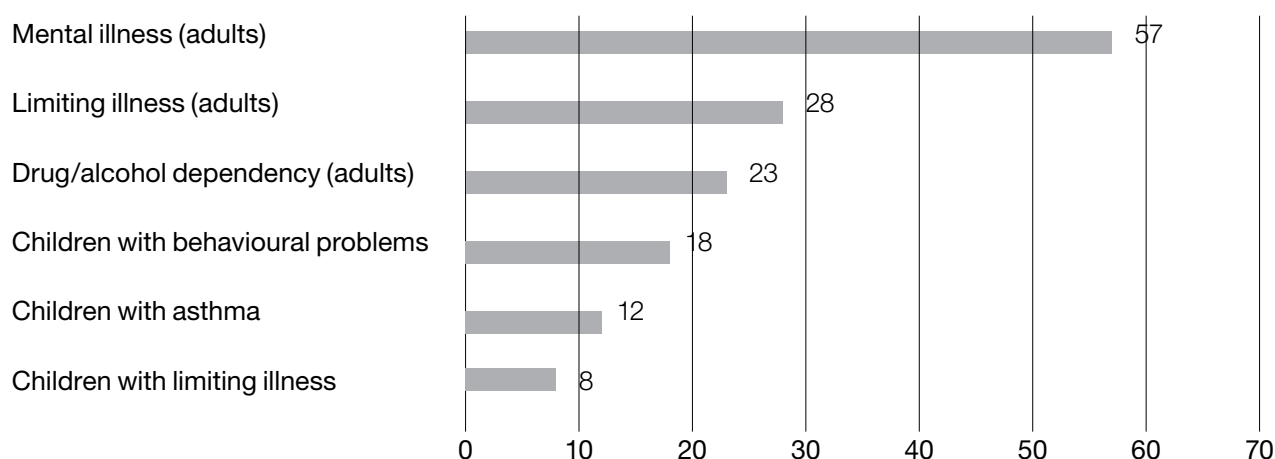
Base: 74 households

12. Because the log was only established in 2004, this will be an under-representation of the levels of vulnerability among service users.

household members or ex-members (five cases). Seven households were at risk of violence or abuse from neighbours. Mental health issues affected nine of the 18 households, and six households had severe drug or alcohol problems. In two cases, at least one household member had a learning disability. Child protection issues were also a concern in eight households.

Children's support needs

The children in the households generally had better health status and fewer support needs than the adults. Eight per cent of children were reported by a parent as having either a disability or a long term limiting illness. Reports of childhood asthma were quite high (12 per cent of children). Behavioural problems (including mental health problems) were quite commonly reported, with 18 per cent of children described by a parent as having these needs. One in five of the lone parent families and one in five of the couples with children reported being in contact with social services at referral.

Information was available on the educational status of 96 children of school age at referral.[13] As **Table 2.11** shows, just under a quarter of the children were experiencing more severe problems at school or were absent from school (24 per cent).

At referral, relatively few children had contact with specialist children's services.

Only three children were reported as receiving Sure Start services (three per cent of the 107 children eligible) and only three were in contact with a Connexions Personal Adviser (six per cent of the 48 children eligible).[14] Contact with local youth projects was slightly higher, with 17 children (13 per cent) working with one of several estate-based projects. Eleven of the 102 children and young people of school age (11 per cent) were in contact with educational welfare services.

Child protection issues were also a strong feature of the caseload of the project. In January 2006, there were child protection concerns, at some level, for fifteen of the households. Concerns included neglect or failure to protect, physical abuse, non-accidental injury, emotional abuse and, in a few cases, inappropriate sexual behaviour or abuse. In some cases, the household was typified by abusive relationships and included not only parental abuse (mother and father) but also abuse between siblings (as well as by children against parents). Most of these households were unknown to social services before the project started working with them. All cases were referred to social services and six households were placed on the child protection risk register. In a further two cases, the concerns were flagged on the system. In another case, a social worker was allocated but the children were not placed on the risk register.

Table 2.11: Educational status of school-age children at referral

Situation	Percentage (of all children)
Attending school with no reported problems	47%
Attending school but experiencing some problems	25%
Temporarily or permanently excluded	14%
Playing truant	5%
Attending Pupil Referral Unit	5%
Special educational needs (SEN) statement	4%

Base: 96 children of school age for whom information was available. Based on reports from a parent or parents.

13. Thirty children were too young to attend school. The educational status of six children of school age was not recorded.
14. Children are eligible for Sure Start from conception until age four (some older children with specific needs can also receive services). Young people aged 13–19 are eligible for Connexions services.

3 Delivering a support service

This section focuses on the delivery and appropriateness of the service provided by Shelter Inclusion Project from the perspective of project users, staff and key agency representatives. The section starts by discussing views of the project's referral and assessment procedures.

Key findings

■ The project was able to provide a wide range of support and was flexible enough to develop and extend this range over the pilot period in response to service users' needs.

■ Targeted support for antisocial behaviour appeared to have increased over time as experience grew, and there was a clearer understanding of how a whole host of supports could impact positively on people's ability to address their own behaviour.

■ Four in ten adult service users were being supported in parenting skills and they described how this support and advice had helped them to control their children and to feel better in themselves.

■ Service users often viewed their relationship with Shelter workers much more positively than those with statutory services or their landlord.

■ Despite staffing shortages, the work with children and young people had become an integral part of the project, and activities for older young people were beginning to be developed.

■ Overall, inter-agency relationships were good and had improved over the course of the pilot.

■ Leaving procedures appeared to be becoming clearer over time, although a minority of users were reluctant to lose the support of a trusted and valued service.

Referral and assessment procedures: perspectives of service users, staff and agencies

Referral procedures

Many service users explained that they had mixed reactions at first to the idea of working with the project. Some reported feeling that they had little choice but to accept the service if they were to keep their homes. Nevertheless, a number of service users said that they were pleased to have been offered support. The comment below was typical.

> The council said something about help with the children – it was either that or get evicted… I was a bit nervous at first… it was like all my children were naughty and out of control and I was a bad mother, but then I realised that they were just trying to help.

Service user

Many respondents said they were referred following complaints to their landlord by neighbours. Some said that they had been referred for more general support such as help with a new tenancy. A small number of respondents were unsure why they had been referred and a number asserted that they were 'taking the blame' for the antisocial behaviour of others. Some households took complete or partial blame for their antisocial behaviour.

Project workers explained that they had worked with households with varying levels of antisocial behaviour. There was concern early on that some agencies were making inappropriate referrals or late

referrals when households were almost at crisis point. Staff felt that this situation had improved, partly as the project aims were promoted and also because there was less of a backlog of high profile antisocial behaviour cases in the area. Towards the end of the pilot period, households were being referred before their antisocial behaviour had reached a crisis point (Table 2.7). In addition, staff reported that they were working with more individuals with mental health and substance misuse problems towards the end of the pilot.

Project staff reported that the referral process had altered little over the pilot period and that they were generally satisfied with it. However, there was some concern that agencies did not always explain the role and nature of the project to households (or possibly that households did not listen) and that prospective service users sometimes thought the service was part of the enforcement process and that they were being compelled to take it up.

Representatives of external agencies felt that the referral process worked well. Their main concern was that the project did not have the capacity to work with as many cases as they would like and was not always able to provide support immediately. It was clear, however, that there remained some misunderstanding about the referral criteria. For example, some external agencies thought the project would not accept households with a history of violence. A couple of housing workers remarked that they simply did not have the time to make assessments of who might benefit from the support of the project. In some cases, information had not filtered down to individual housing managers.

Assessment procedures
Very few service users remembered their first meeting with support workers and the initial assessment in any detail. Most said that they remembered being asked what sort of help they required and being told what Shelter Inclusion Project could help with, although few could remember exactly what had been said at the time.

Project staff explained that service user assessments were completed on a rota basis and therefore, the worker who did the initial assessment would not necessarily be allocated the case. Project staff felt that the initial assessment could be intimidating for new service users and, although they recognised that the information required was important, they felt that there were too many questions (partly for evaluation purposes).

Risk assessments, to identify clients who pose a potential risk to project workers, were carried out for all new cases. The project tried to involve service users in risk assessment wherever possible but was still reliant on information provided by other agencies, eg social services. Some staff felt that, overall, a high level of information was provided by agencies. Occasionally, however, it was thought that agencies were reluctant to share information, or did not appreciate its relevance to workers. No households had been turned down to date for having too high a risk profile.

Anonymised information relating to the risks posed by individual households was analysed. In a few cases, households had been assessed as presenting potential risks to project workers, often due to a history of violent and abusive behaviour from one or more individuals within a household. In a few cases individuals had used or attempted to use weapons, including firearms. Where a particular risk existed, workers would make joint visits to a household or, where necessary, meet the household in a neutral area such as a day centre. This was clearly necessary for the safety of the workers but staff were concerned that it reduced the time they had to work with service users and suggested that volunteers or social work students might accompany them on visits instead.

Types of support delivered by Shelter Inclusion Project

Table 3.1 shows the wide range of support provided to households. The support provided by the project was focused on preventing antisocial behaviour, both by addressing specific aspects of individual behaviour as well as meeting wider needs that could impact on antisocial behaviour. Where appropriate, project workers made referrals to other agencies to provide specific support or care for service users, for example where there were mental health problems or drug/alcohol dependency.

Households were also assisted with practical day-to-day issues, for example indebtedness, that might cause stress or feelings of helplessness and could result in antisocial behaviour. Helping someone to engage with education, employment or training, or some other meaningful activity, might also help promote self-esteem and in turn lead to improvements in behaviour. This basic strategy, as a first step towards addressing the roots of unacceptable behaviour, permeated much of the Shelter Inclusion Project approach.

Table 3.1: Types of support provided to households

Type of support	Percentage of households
Managing bills and money (including debt management)	73%
Support with specific acts of antisocial behaviour	67%
Help with accessing other services	62%
Help with managing stress and/or depression	58%
Vouchers, tools or other help with decoration	51%
Help with claiming benefits	50%
Assistance with securing furniture or white goods	44%
Advice or help with parenting	40%
Help with developing greater self-confidence	38%
Vouchers, tools or other help with gardening	36%
Help with ensuring children are in school	33%
Help with access to adult education or training	33%
Shelter Inclusion Project children's worker	33%
Help with moving to another area	31%
Advice or help in 'getting along with other people'	24%
Help with accessing community groups or services	22%
Help in securing safety equipment for children (eg stair or fire guards)	22%
Advice or help with anger management	17%
Practical support in setting up a new home	15%

Base: 74 households. Percentages are rounded.

Service user views

Most service users described receiving various forms of support and advice ranging from help with practical matters to emotional support, as well as activities and events, although two service users said that although they were visited regularly by a Shelter worker this was just for a 'chat'.

The majority of service users said that they had received appropriate help or advice. A few service users in early interviews suggested that although the project had been supportive, the main cause of their problems had been the behaviour of older children in the household who had little or no contact with Shelter. The project responded to the gap in provision by appointing a youth worker (the Children and Young People Team Leader).

Many service users explained how useful the project had been in helping them liaise with their landlord with respect to complaints of antisocial behaviour. Users often felt that they had not been listened to by their housing provider at first, but that Shelter's support meant they started to receive fairer treatment, and in a few cases, meant that problems with their landlord effectively stopped.

Assistance with accessing other services, including solicitors, counselling services, anger management courses, schools, and youth projects, was valued by service users. Some also explained how project workers helped address problems with neighbours, unwelcome visitors or other problems faced by their household.

Service users appreciated the practical nature of much of the support provided by the project, including help with repairs, gifts of beds for the children, help with buying items of school uniforms, and the provision of decorating vouchers. Service users also often explained how project workers were assisting them to better manage their money and how repayment schemes had been set up. This money management, as well as other forms of support, for example with dependency problems, helped people feel better generally and more able to cope.

A number of adult service users were being supported in parenting skills, usually with the help of a children's worker. In a few cases, this support was quite intensive, but despite its interventionist nature it was valued highly by parents because they felt it had helped them to control their children and to feel better in themselves.

[Shelter children's worker] told me about time out and star charts and stuff like that, they all worked and I generally felt more of a better parent with the things she told me to use.

Service user

Some service users, particularly in the final round of interviews in summer 2005, mentioned that their support worker had provided advice about volunteering opportunities, education, training or employment. Three service users said that they and/or their partner had started training courses or new jobs, while others were planning to do so.

Finally, a number of service users highlighted the nature of the relationship between the support worker and themselves. Almost without exception, service users said that they liked the workers and found them easy to get on with. Most service users viewed their relationship with Shelter workers much more positively than those with statutory services or their landlord. It was important that staff treated them with 'respect' and did 'not look down' on them, as well as being there to 'listen'.

It should be noted that although service users generally felt at ease with their support workers and were willing to share their problems, the development of trust took some time and a small number of service users said that they had not yet told support workers about all their problems.

Staff views

Project staff initially described the support they provided as general resettlement, a non-specific service that was based on the kinds of tenancy support provided to homeless households and those at risk of homelessness. Over the course of the pilot the workers reported that there was an increased focus on antisocial behaviour issues and that the service began to change shape and adapt to the specific requirements of working with often vulnerable households with antisocial behaviour. However, they stressed that they had received no specific training around addressing antisocial behaviour but had developed the approach over time.

I think if they are going to replicate it then there does need to be some kind of idea how it is done, because we have never been told how to work with people around antisocial behaviour, it is always something we have developed ourselves. But if anyone is setting up another project they really have to look at how they are training and supporting staff to do that and not expect people to work it out on their own.

Project staff

The workers explained that many people had urgent and pressing problems that required intervention before issues such as antisocial behaviour could be addressed. It often took some time to build up a relationship and gain the confidence and trust of service users.

We have had so many families referred to us in absolute crisis. Sometimes it is quite difficult to sit down and focus on a support plan – they have very immediate and definite needs – they just want to stop the bailiffs.

Project staff

Project workers explained that they provided a wide range of advice and support as well as practical help but that the main aim of all interventions was to address antisocial behaviour and/or the underlying causes of antisocial behaviour. The flexibility of the service was seen as a particular strength. In many cases seemingly simple interventions had a positive impact.

We'll provide or do anything where we can see some sustainable outcomes in terms of antisocial behaviour – for example, the project will provide beds for children where they do not have one – outcomes are considerable in terms of self-esteem, behaviour, meeting curfews and emotional well-being.

Project staff

Agency views

Respondents in external agencies did not always know the details of the service that the project delivered. Senior staff in housing and other agencies tended to know more about the project and had a clearer idea of the resettlement/enforcement approach. Generally, while they were positive about the project, agency representatives were unsure of how the project worked and how it dealt with antisocial behaviour.

Work with children and young people

Service user views

Where children were being supported in a household by a children's worker, this was highly valued by parents. Even where children were not explicitly being supported, a number of users commented on how much the children, (particularly younger children rather than older teenagers), liked the support workers and how staff made an effort to engage with the children. Most families interviewed also highlighted the occasional family days that they found enjoyable, like trips to a zoo or a theme park.

Support from the children's worker included liaison with schools over attendance problems, behavioural difficulties, and instances of bullying, as well as referring on to other services. Users also explained that the workers spent time doing activities with the children and young people, including after-school clubs, a photography course and outdoor pursuits, which users said their children had enjoyed. However, some parents said that older children had not been interested in taking part.

Few of the children interviewed were able to say much about Shelter Inclusion Project although most were aware that the service was working with their family. A few children said that the project had helped the family to buy goods such as beds and towels and one group of siblings said that they thought their mother 'seemed better' after working with Shelter. Those children who had been involved in activities and trips often seemed confused about who had organised these because they tended to be in contact with more than one support service that included youth workers.

Staff and agency views

The project had experienced particular difficulties in recruiting and retaining experienced children's and young persons' workers. Staff were concerned that many families and children who would have benefited had not always had access to this support.

Despite staff shortages, project staff explained that the activities provided for young people had developed and expanded and the project had also started to involve parents in activities with their children such as trips to nearby countryside. These activities were intended to be far more than diversionary activities; they were designed to address behavioural problems, to encourage parents to spend time with their children and to reward good behaviour.

…they [activities] are part of a wider programme of support that is about encouraging that child's confidence and self-esteem, but ultimately about addressing the antisocial behaviour. At the end of that we are getting parents to come out with their children and young people and actually showing them how to spend quality time with their children and how to do things that are affordable in their own area.

Project staff

Towards the end of the pilot, workers were supporting individual children more intensively. Group work had also become more targeted; for example, an after-school club had not proved successful because of a low staff:child ratio. Instead, staff were working with small groups of young people, all of the same age, on one activity (eg rock climbing) or one problem (eg bullying).

A number of agency representatives considered the fact that the project could work with both adults and children to be a particular strength of the service. Overall, work with children and young people had become a much more integral aspect of the project's work towards the end of the pilot period.

> …there was a big divide between support workers and children's workers; we didn't know each other's roles or what the other did but now we are much more of a team… it feels like a really strong team now…
>
> *Project staff*

Inter-agency working

Service user views
Many service users explained they had contact with other agencies or had had contact with them in the past (eg Youth Offending Team (YOT), health visitors, social services, school nurses and youth inclusion projects). In general, service users reported that many of these agencies had provided them with little help. Service users' views on their housing provider varied. Understandably, there was some hostility where action was being taken, but there was also appreciation of the efforts made by some housing officers.

A number of users spoke about how Shelter liaised with agencies other than housing. For example, two users explained that Shelter had taken a lead in multi-agency case conferences and that social services had stopped working with them because they were so well supported by other agencies. Shelter was also seen to be working effectively alongside other agencies such as youth services.

Staff and agency views
Project staff felt that, overall, multi-agency working and relationships between agencies had improved over the pilot period. Staff felt they had developed good working relations with the YOT, schools, education, and health visitors and this was supported by agency representatives. Relations with social services had been difficult, largely because of social services being very short-staffed, but working relations had become easier as staffing improved. Information exchange between Shelter and enforcement agencies, particularly important to enable the project to respond as quickly as possible to antisocial behaviour, was described as effective. Project staff continued to be involved with the Anti-social Behaviour Case Conference Panel and the Case Intervention Group.[15]

Staff stressed the importance of agencies having clear delineation from each other in their work so that service users could understand as far as possible which agency could help with which issues as well as avoiding duplication of services.

Although staff felt that the work of the project was valued by many agencies in Rochdale, they thought that some remained sceptical about their work and/or that some agencies preferred to adopt a more hard-line approach to antisocial behaviour. The interviews with agency representatives suggested that there was a good deal of respect for the project but that there were other reasons (such as lack of knowledge and time) why agencies did not always refer to the project. A number of agency representatives pointed out that the courts now wanted to see evidence that landlords had tried different options before resorting to eviction proceedings and that this provided a further incentive for housing providers to refer tenants to the project.

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15. The Anti-social Behaviour Case Conference Panel takes decisions on whether cases should progress to an ASBO application. The Case Intervention Group is a multi-agency panel set up to share information and ensure early intervention in antisocial behaviour cases.

Both project staff and agency representatives acknowledged that there could be some conflicts of interest but it was clear that they felt able to resolve such problems.

> ...there have been some conflicts – in a sense we have different aims; Shelter is there to provide an advocacy role for its clients and it can be really annoying... they are doing their job and I am trying to do mine... but we have a good enough relationship to discuss these issues.

Agency representative

Service user involvement

Staff explained how they had encouraged and supported service user involvement in the project, for example through arranging focus groups and user groups. However, while this was thought to be an important principle, it had been very difficult to achieve because the majority of users did not express an interest in taking part in the running of the organisation (although they enjoyed trips and other activities). Staff explained that most service users (and former service users) had a lot to cope with in their lives and that user involvement was, understandably, not a priority for them.

Ending support

Service users

Overall there seemed to be a better understanding of the closure process than there had been during the early stages of the pilot. Most service users were aware that they would receive support for about 12 months and that they would be able to contact the project if they experienced problems after their case was closed. Most people whose cases were still open envisaged that they would continue to need some level of support in the future. A small number of people were concerned that they would get into rent arrears again, or struggle with bureaucracy, without the support of the project.

Where people's cases had closed, most people felt happy that this was appropriate and understood that they had 'had their time'.

> I was very grateful for the time I had with them and there is people probably worse than me now, you know, having the problems that I had then, which obviously they need help… they made sure that they'd done all what they could and they asked me a couple of times before they stopped if there was anything else.

Service user

A few people remained quite confused about when support would end, but these tended to be people in the early stages of contact with the project. A couple of service users said that they had not seen a worker or heard from Shelter Inclusion Project for some time and that they were not sure whether their case had been closed or not.

Staff and agency views

Project staff explained that they attempted to be clear with service users about how long support would last and the process of ending support, and used three-monthly reviews to introduce the idea of support being gradually tailed off. However, while staff felt that service users were aware when a case was going to close, some users raised new issues around the time when a case was moving towards closing.

…everything has come out, massive child protection issues have been raised, real issues of vulnerability have come up… whether it is only when people realise that we are really going – that it is voluntary and that it is going to end, that they suddenly start telling us loads of stuff, or suddenly things start coming to the fore… so it is right that we have extended support.

Project staff

There was an unease among staff that these support needs were not always reported to them until the service was coming to an end but it was thought likely that some issues required a great deal of trust to be built up between worker and service user. The project tended to extend support for these households to address issues, often working alongside other agencies.

Agency representatives were unsure whether the time limit was appropriate or not. Some respondents felt that 12 months should be adequate and that if people had not changed in a year then they probably never would, while others were concerned that people would continue having problems throughout their lives.

A second issue that arose for the project was a difficulty in referring some households on to mainstream agencies. Again, it appeared that when trust had been built up over time, some households were extremely reluctant to be 'passed on' to another agency and some refused point blank. This was perceived by project workers as a threat to longer term sustainability. However, agencies seemed to be unaware of this problem and thought that one of the strengths of the service was helping people to access mainstream services.

4 Shelter Inclusion Project outcomes

The objectives of the project were to reduce antisocial behaviour, promote social inclusion and community stability and prevent eviction. This section discusses the effects of the project on the lives of service users. Firstly, it assesses progress with addressing antisocial behaviour, promoting tenancy sustainment, and other key outcomes. Secondly, it examines the perceived outcomes of the service from the viewpoint of project users and agency representatives.

Key findings

- The project showed significant success in ending antisocial behaviour and promoting tenancy sustainment among the households with whom it had worked.

- Among the 45 households which had completed their time with the project, 60 per cent were reported as no longer exhibiting any antisocial behaviour. A further 11 per cent of these 'closed cases' were reported as showing improvements in respect of their antisocial behaviour. Overall, 71 per cent of closed cases had either ceased their antisocial behaviour or shown improvement. Tracking service users' behaviour before, during and after the project, however, showed that it sometimes took a long time to address more severe antisocial behaviour and that it was not always possible to do so.

- Eighty-four per cent of closed cases were assessed as no longer being at risk of homelessness following contact with Shelter Inclusion Project services.

- A small number of adults experienced an improvement in their economic status while with the project. The interviews with service users suggested that the support provided by the project helped some adults address their low self-esteem, which could act as a barrier to their seeking employment, education or training.

- Just under half of the closed case households were reported as making progress with money management.

- Thirty-four children and young people received direct support from the project with their education. In 91 per cent of these cases, improvements in school attendance were recorded by the project workers. This indicated very positive outcomes in helping to re-engage marginalised children and young people with education.

- Service users felt that the project's intervention had made a significant difference to their lives. In particular, many felt that it had stopped them from being evicted. Most people felt they were managing to address antisocial behaviour, through feeling more in control of their lives and better able to deal with problems such as debt.

- Agency representatives reported that the project had been successful in helping service users address problems in their lives. Some conflicts of interest were addressed through the professionalism of the project, and good trust had been established. The project was felt to have played a part, alongside other initiatives, in addressing wider social exclusion at a local level.

Overview of the service delivered by Shelter Inclusion Project

At 30 June 2005, 45 of the 74 Shelter Inclusion Project households were closed cases (households had that ceased to use the service) and 29 were open cases (ie 39 per cent of all households were still receiving the service). This section reviews the progress of both closed and open cases, although it is particularly focused on the outcomes for closed cases.

Table 4.1 shows the length of time households had contact with the project. Most closed cases had received the service for between six months and 24 months (74 per cent of closed cases). A handful of closed cases had received the service for more than two years (seven per cent of closed cases).

It was not possible to record the amount of time that workers spent working with the households; however, the interviews with households and workers suggested that, typically, project workers tended to visit households once a week, with the frequency of visits declining as progress was made. Workers would also telephone households routinely and contact agencies on their behalf. Those households being supported by the children's and young people's worker would receive an additional weekly visit centred on the children or young people.

Further details on the average length of time that service users spend with the project are provided in Section 5.

Improvements in antisocial behaviour

Closed cases

Twenty-seven of the 45 closed case households (60 per cent) were assessed by the project workers as no longer being involved in antisocial behaviour when their cases were closed (**Table 4.2**). This outcome was very positive. Improvements in antisocial behaviour were reported in another five closed cases (11 per cent of closed cases). This meant that a total of 32 closed cases (71 per cent) were reported as having positive outcomes in respect of antisocial behaviour.

In a few instances, antisocial behaviour was reported as being unresolved following the service's intervention (seven per cent of closed cases). In some cases, households had left the Rochdale Borough area before their antisocial behaviour was fully resolved (13 per cent of closed cases). Sometimes contact with the project had been ended by a household prior to antisocial behaviour issues being resolved, leaving the outcome unclear (8 per cent of closed cases).

Eight of the closed case households were reported as being involved in criminal activity at referral. In half these cases, antisocial behaviour was reported by project workers as having ceased altogether, indicating that the project could successfully address the more extreme forms of antisocial behaviour it encountered. The difficulties of engaging

Table 4.1: Time spent in contact with Shelter Inclusion Project services

Time spent with Shelter Inclusion Project service	Case status		All households
	Open cases	Closed cases	
Less than 3 months	10%	4%	7%
3–6 months	24%	16%	19%
6–12 months	10%	27%	20%
1 year–18 months	17%	20%	19%
18 months–2 years	17%	27%	23%
2 years or more	21%	7%	12%

Base: 45 closed cases and 29 open cases. Percentages are rounded.

Table 4.2: Antisocial behaviour progress reported by the project (closed cases)

Situation	Percentage of closed cases
Antisocial behaviour ceased altogether	60%
Antisocial behaviour improved	11%
Antisocial behaviour not improved	7%
Household moved away from Rochdale Borough area	13%
Household ended contact: outcome unclear	8%

Base: 45 households. Percentages are rounded. Based on reports from project workers.

with households involved in criminal activity were also evident, in that three of the other four households chose to cease contact with the project and another one was reported as not having improved following contact with the project.

Open cases
Among the 29 open cases that Shelter Inclusion Project was still working with on 30 June 2005, six households (21 per cent of all open cases) were reported as having ceased involvement in antisocial behaviour and another six were reported as showing improvement with respect to antisocial behaviour (21 per cent of open cases). In overall terms, 42 per cent of open cases had either ceased to exhibit antisocial behaviour or had shown improvement. The project was still working to address antisocial behaviour with the other open cases at the time the evaluation ended.

Tracking information on antisocial behaviour
Although the project monitoring information and interviews provided good quality data on service user satisfaction and progress during time with the project, it was necessary to collect additional data to assess antisocial behaviour and housing outcomes of service users fully. The research team therefore attempted to collect data on households for a five year period (October 2000–June 2005) to assess two key outcomes: changes in antisocial behaviour, and changes in tenancy situation. For reasons explained further in Appendix A, robust data was only available for analysis in the case of ten households.

Legal and Enforcement records and tenancy files[16] showed that members of the ten households had a record of some form of antisocial behaviour, often over a period of years, before being referred to Shelter Inclusion Project. Some of this antisocial behaviour was serious; for example, criminal acts such as the possession of firearms and the destruction of property. Other forms of antisocial behaviour, while less serious – rubbish in gardens and noise nuisance, for example – had in a few cases persisted over quite some time. Nonetheless, it should be noted that households referred to Legal and Enforcement probably represented more severe cases of antisocial behaviour than would have been the case for some other households working with the project.

At the time of writing, eight of the ten households were in the same tenancy as they were at referral to Shelter Inclusion Project. One had made a planned move with the support of Shelter and only one tenant had made an unplanned move during her time with the project. At the time of writing this tenant was again living in the social rented sector and being supported by Shelter.

16. It should be noted that while the available records were helpful in building a picture of service users' tenancy histories, there were gaps in the data. For example, a couple of service users had moved home a number of times over a relatively short period but no reasons are recorded and one service user appears to have been referred to Shelter Inclusion Project for a second time but there are no reasons given as to why.

Four of the ten households ceased to be involved in antisocial behaviour following their referral to Shelter Inclusion Project (there were no recorded complaints or actions following referral). However, tenancy files and Legal and Enforcement records suggest that six households continued to be involved in various forms of antisocial behaviour for a time following referral to Shelter Inclusion Project. For the most part, this behaviour tended to be less serious antisocial behaviour (noise, youth nuisance, arguments with neighbours, rubbish in gardens and problems caused by visitors) but two households were still receiving warnings about more serious offences including assault and possession of a firearm. Only two of the ten households continued to be involved in antisocial behaviour throughout their time with Shelter.

As noted earlier in the report, it often took some time to gain people's trust and begin to address their antisocial behaviour. Further, the proceedings for actions such as ASBOs and Notices of Seeking Possession (one household was subject to an ASBO and one to a NOSP after referral to Shelter) were likely to have commenced before the household received support from the project. Some of the tenant files suggest that housing officers referred tenants to Shelter some time before they were actually accepted by the project and provided with support (probably because the project was working at full capacity).

At the time of writing, seven of these ten cases had closed and three of these households had no further complaints

of antisocial behaviour made against them. Of the remaining closed cases two former service users had court injunctions imposed, one was the subject of complaints by neighbours to Environmental Health and another had been referred to Shelter Inclusion Project for a second time. The tracking of ten of the more severe antisocial behaviour cases (measured by a referral to Legal and Enforcement), showed that antisocial behaviour may not cease altogether in some cases and some households may require more than one period of support from the project.

Improvements in tenancy sustainment

Closed cases

The project workers assessed 38 of the 45 closed cases (84 per cent) as being at no risk of homelessness following their contact with the service (**Table 4.3**). Only in a small number of cases (7 per cent) did the workers consider there to be a continued threat to the tenancy. This was a strong indicator of success with respect to one of the main objectives of the project, after addressing antisocial behaviour, which was to end the risk of potential homelessness associated with antisocial behaviour.

A positive finding was that 14 of the closed cases (31 per cent) who were assessed by the workers as no longer being at risk of homelessness were those families and individuals with a history of homelessness. This suggested that households who had sustained experience of risks to their tenancy had been helped towards greater security by the project.

Table 4.3: Tenancy sustainment among closed cases

Reported risks to tenancy	Percentage of closed cases
Antisocial behaviour ended, tenancy secure	71%
Household ceased contact, tenancy secure	13%
At continued risk of homelessness	7%
Outcome unclear	9%

Base: 45 households. Percentages are rounded. Based on reports from project workers.

Table 4.4: Tenancy sustainment among open cases

Reported risks to tenancy	Percentage of open cases
Work on antisocial behaviour ongoing, but tenancy secure	48%
Antisocial behaviour ended, tenancy secure	34%
Work on antisocial behaviour ongoing, housing situation not yet clear	10%
At continued risk of homelessness	7%

Base: 29 households. Percentages are rounded. Based on reports from project workers.

Open cases

Table 4.4 shows the reported risks of homelessness among those households who were open cases as at 30 June 2005. A total of 83 per cent of these cases were assessed by project workers as not being at risk of homelessness; a further indication of the project's success.

Planned housing moves while with the project

Sixteen of the 45 closed case households made planned moves with the cooperation and support of the project or at the household's own initiative. In six cases, the move was recorded by project workers as being undertaken primarily to address antisocial behaviour. In five out of these six cases, the move was reported as having helped to address antisocial behaviour.

Making a planned move was not associated with any increased risk of homelessness. Fifteen of the 16 households that had made a planned move were assessed by project workers as not being at risk of homelessness (94 per cent of the households that made a planned move).

There was a handful of cases, four in total, in which households had moved away without informing the project. However, this small number of moves must be treated as distinct from the 16 planned moves, because they could have culminated in homelessness.

Improvements in economic status

A small number of adults experienced a change in their economic status while with the project. Six women who were carers for their children at home at referral entered employment, five full time and one part time, and another woman entered further education. One man entered full time employment from a situation of unemployment. The project did not provide education, employment or training services, but did make referrals to these services. The interviews with service users suggested that the emotional and practical support provided by the project helped some adults address their low self-esteem, which could act as a barrier to their seeking employment, education and training.

The majority of adults had experienced no change in their economic status; most continued to do unpaid work as carers for their children or were not in paid work for other reasons. Three unemployed women gave birth and became carers for their new children.

In 46 per cent of closed cases, workers reported that households had made progress in debt and money management. Because managing debt and living on a restricted income was often a significant issue for the households, this was another positive outcome.

Improvements in children's educational outcomes

Information on 49 children and young people who were directly supported was made available to the research team by the project. These children and young people were those with whom the project worked on a more intensive basis, taking an interest in their lives and their personal and educational development. Workers provided support related to education to 34 of these 49 children and young people (69 per cent of the children and young people who were worked with directly by the project) (**Table 4.5**).

The level of support provided depended on a child or young person's needs. In two cases, project workers were instrumental in getting recognition for educational problems linked to specific medical conditions, and specialist educational provision put in place. In one instance, this process also facilitated access to appropriate medical treatment. In another case, project workers took a significant role in securing access to education for three children who had been outside formal education for years. In several instances, children were encountering some difficulty at school because of behavioural problems that the project workers were able to help resolve or help was provided in encouraging and supporting school attendance.

Table 4.6 shows the outcomes of the support provided to children and young people in respect of their education. The situation with these children and young people could be fluid and information was not available on the educational progress of all the individuals with whom the project had worked, particularly when a case had been closed.

Table 4.5: Education-related support provided directly to children and young people

Type of education-related support provided	Percentage
Helping secure specialist education services	32%
Helping address behavioural problems	32%
Helping address problems with attendance	32%
Support in accessing further education	3%

Base: 34 children and young people who received education-related support from the project.
Covers open and closed cases. Percentages are rounded. Based on reports from project workers.

Table 4.6: Known outcomes for children and young people receiving support with education

Outcome	Percentage
School attendance improved via referral to specialist education services	32%
School attendance improved following help with addressing behavioural problems	29%
School attendance improved following help with addressing poor attendance	27%
Successfully accessed further education with project support	2%
Problems not resolved	9%

Base: 34 children and young people who received intensive services from the project. Covers both open and closed cases. Percentages are rounded. Based on reports from project workers.

The data that were available suggested a series of very positive outcomes, with 91 per cent of the children and young people reported as showing an improvement in school attendance. The achievement of the project workers in helping re-engage marginalised young people with education was a significant success for the project. Only in a handful of cases (nine per cent, three children) did problems in relation to education remain unresolved and in these cases the households had ceased contact with the project.

Outcomes of the project: perspectives of service users and agencies

This final section provides an assessment of the outcomes of the project by service users and agency representatives.

Service user views

Many households explained that they would probably have been evicted from their tenancy if they had not received support from Shelter Inclusion Project. In some cases, service users believed that the act of signing up to the project itself seemed to make housing and enforcement agencies treat them more fairly and be more willing to give them a second chance. For others, the support they received meant that antisocial behaviour warnings did not proceed to the point of eviction.

I think the council would have evicted me, I'd have been on a dead-end estate bringing up four kids round a load of junkies and my kids would probably be junkies.

Service user

Some people interviewed were still struggling with antisocial behaviour and some complained that they were still victims of antisocial behaviour. However most users interviewed had managed to address these issues, or were in the process of addressing them. A number of service users explained that complaints against

them had been caused by the antisocial behaviour of visitors, violent ex-partners or older children. In some cases the problems ceased because the perpetrator moved away or received a custodial sentence for antisocial behaviour or other offences. In others, service users, with the support of the project, had learned to be more assertive and to take control over the behaviour of their children or unwanted visitors.

I had problems controlling the children… I couldn't, and they controlled me. But since working with Shelter, things have improved. The swearing has stopped… now, instead of shouting at them, I do things like making them sit on the naughty step or stopping them from watching telly….

Service user

Dealing with antisocial behaviour was usually a long process that included learning how to communicate more effectively with others in their life and in the wider community. A number of service users described how the process of being supported and trusted over time had given them resources on which they could draw to manage their lives better.

She (neighbour) is still continuing... but since I've had help from Shelter I feel more confident about what rights I've got and what she can and can't do to me, so I don't really need to panic any more or overreact about things... I feel like I can do something about it... without the risk of losing my home. I feel a lot better anyway, I was under the doctor and everything.

Service user

…at one time it was just a free-for-all every morning… they'd all be scrapping so I'd just go back to my bedroom and shut the door… Now if they are creating and they are up before me I'll get up and sort them out… they are not as bad as they were and I feel better in myself.

Service user

Most households were on a low income and, as shown in Section 2, a majority were in debt. Although debts did not vanish overnight, the project had helped many households to stabilise this debt through repayment schedules, in turn reducing the anxiety attached to owing money to others.

I think I'd still be where I was… as in debt wise… I don't think I'd have done as much as I have – I wouldn't have sorted my bills out or nowt and would have ended up getting a load of fines and all that…

Service user

The problem of debt was ongoing and recurring. One service user said she had not told her worker about her debts and another said that she would probably get into rent arrears or other debt again if her support worker was not there to remind her to make payments. One former service user said that she was in rent arrears because of a Housing Benefit mix up; she was due in court but had contacted Shelter Inclusion Project and staff had put her in touch with a solicitor.

Not all service users had succeeded in transforming their lives and some continued to experience problems. Nevertheless, many believed that things had improved somewhat and that they would have been evicted had they not had Shelter's support. One former service user who had been supported by the project for nearly two years still had an injunction against her for antisocial behaviour. She explained that Shelter Inclusion Project had helped her keep her home, helped to take more pride in the house, and to sort out her life in many other ways; however, no one, she said, not even doctors, could help her stop drinking.

Through my alcoholism we have had a lot of problems with noise. I had Shelter working with me for 12 months and we did not have one complaint in that 12 months… but when Shelter stopped, there were like six months of complaints about us.

Service user

Other former service users were clearly beginning to take control of their lives. A couple of former service users had moved into the private rented sector because they were unhappy in their previous homes but could not apply for a social housing exchange because of antisocial behaviour problems. Both these service users had found employment, were clearly making an effort to make a home for their families and said they felt much happier. Other service users had started to move towards a fuller participation in society, either entering or wishing to enter the labour market, volunteering opportunities or further education.

...I managed to get myself together [after support ended]... The Jobcentre had said for me to go on a discovery week, there was a group of about 20 girls and I thought, 'Oh, I don't know, I didn't feel confident' and did not want to go there... I was a bit nervous about being on my own... but it was great and that gave me the boost to go to work.

Service user

The overall impact of the project appeared to reach further for some households than just keeping people in their tenancy, resulting in a change in people's attitudes and lives. Although not everyone felt this way, a number of users spoke of coming out of depression and beginning to take control of their lives; moving from previously intolerable situations to sustainable lifestyles.

They did help a lot, I started sorting myself out once I met them, [the support worker] noticed the difference in the house. She sort of bucked me up and got my life back. I had got to the point where I didn't give a monkey's, I'd get up in the morning and go and have a drink and not worry. Same routine every day. I was always worrying about money but then I'd think 'sod that' and go for a drink. But drinking isn't the answer because the debts are there the next morning plus a crappy head. She were lovely…

Service user

Agency views

Overall, agency representatives spoke highly of Shelter Inclusion Project and believed it to have been successful in meeting its aims. Respondents generally spoke of the professionalism of project workers and their willingness to work with agencies to overcome conflicts of interest. There appeared to be a great deal of trust in the project and in individual members of staff.

Respondents at a more senior level learned about the project from colleagues, the interim reports on the evaluation, and from the project itself.

From what partners tell me it is very successful. Those agencies that use it heap praise on it... the way they work with other agencies and housing officers.

Agency representative

Respondents who had made referrals to the project were able to explain individual cases and, although they were not always aware of exactly how Shelter Inclusion Project had helped, they were generally pleased with the outcome, both for themselves and their tenants.

[tenant] was close to being sectioned, she was in such a bad state. But when Shelter Inclusion Project supported her she was managing her rent arrears, the property was a mess but it was decorated and all sorted with the help of Shelter. She then decided she wanted a fresh start and Shelter helped her… the project also helped her apply for a job, so it really is a fabulous story. Her life was turned round… It was a good outcome for the tenant and a good outcome for us.

Agency representative

I have always found them to be very helpful and they seem to have a very high success rate. I mean there are some people that are never going to be helped through unwillingness to help themselves or unwillingness to get involved but where Shelter has been involved they do seem to have been able to bring about some meaningful changes...

Agency representative

Agency representatives were asked about the impact of Shelter Inclusion Project on local communities. Most respondents believed that there had been a great deal of social improvement on many of the estates in Rochdale, including those where Shelter had worked. However, while they felt that the project had had a positive impact on individual households and immediate neighbours they found it difficult to gauge its wider impact, especially because there was a wide range of new initiatives – including regeneration, youth services and other types of support – working in Rochdale.

It is difficult to say that any one initiative has been responsible for the change [in certain areas of Rochdale] – it is a multi-agency approach and it isn't any one initiative that sorts a problem out. The Shelter project is part and parcel of a whole package of things that we can put together where we are dealing with a combination of problems that created a bad effect on the estates... Shelter Inclusion Project is unique – it is complemented by other services but it is unique.

Agency representative

5 Shelter Inclusion Project: costs and cost consequences

This section considers the costs associated with Shelter Inclusion Project and some of its potential cost consequences. It starts by presenting the sources of income and types of expenditure. The section then reviews the potential short term and longer term costs associated with tenancy failure and some forms of antisocial behaviour, enabling conclusions to be drawn about the project's financial impact.

Key findings

- The total income and expenditure for the project per year was approximately £300,000. The main income sources were Supporting People and the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund.

- The average duration of contact with the project was 9.3 months for those households leaving the project in 2003/04, and 16.4 months for leaving in 2004/05.

- The average total cost for each *household* leaving the project in 2003/04 was £6,280, compared with an average cost of about £11,900 for those leaving the project in 2004/05. It is estimated that the average total cost per *household* whose case closed in 2005/06 was £9,254.

- The average total cost per *individual member* of each household whose case was closed during 2003/04 was £2,700, and £3,380 in 2004/05.

- In the short term, costs of up to £9,500 per household could be saved by households not losing tenancies because of antisocial behaviour. It is estimated that antisocial behaviour costs £3.4 billion a year across England and Wales.

- Longer term cost consequences of not preventing antisocial behaviour include those associated with social exclusion, educational underachievement and unemployment.

- An average cost of around £9,000 per household[17] can be considered good value for money for both the Exchequer and for society as a whole.

Sources of income

Table 5.1 shows the sources of the project's income during 2003/04 and 2004/05. Total income in 2004/05 was about 80 per cent of income in the previous year. In 2003/04 income was received

Table 5.1: Sources of income

Source	Actual 2003/04		Actual 2004/05		Budget 2005/06	
	£	%	£	%	£	%
Local Authority (LA) Grants	148,702	41.4	0	0.0	0	0.0
LA Supporting People	79,699	22.2	175,703	60.7	170,876	55.3
LA Neighbourhood Renewal	58,000	16.2	109,081	37.7	113,904	36.8
Children's Fund	21,000	5.8	4,793	1.6	0	0.0
Homelessness Directorate	50,000	13.9	0	0.0	0	0.0
Other grant income	1,725	0.5	0	0.0	24,411	7.9
Total income	359,126	100.0	289,577	100.0	309,191	100.0

Source: Shelter (budget data for 2005/06 provided in May 2005)

17. The average costs over 2003/04, 2004/05 and 2005/06.

from several sources[18]; the main sources of income in 2004/05 and 2005/06 were Supporting People and the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund.

Types of expenditure

Table 5.2 shows expenditure against four key headings in 2003/04 and 2004/05 and the budgeted amounts for 2005/06. As staff costs comprise the greatest proportion of the annual expenditure, the three elements that make up 'total staff costs' are also shown.

Staff costs comprise about three-quarters of expenditure (ranging from about 71 per cent in 2003/04 to an expected 76 per cent in 2005/06). Costs associated with permanent staff account for most of this expenditure. Staff-related costs were £36,375 in 2004/05, which was higher than in the other years due to recruitment costs of almost £27,000. The non-staff costs are generally similar across the three years.

Running costs cover elements such as office costs, premises-related costs and vehicles.

The support expenditure (**Table 5.2**) includes hardship payments of approximately £5,000–£7,000 each year. Evidence from Shelter Inclusion Project indicated that this money could be used to pay for one-off items that the household was unable to afford but which could have a significant impact on helping the household reduce its antisocial behaviour. Examples included buying a school uniform for a boy who was truanting from school (resulting in regular school attendance) and hiring a skip to enable a household to clear its garden, which had become a local dumping ground because of its untidy state. Both of these examples show that problems can start and then escalate for want of a relatively modest amount of money, but one that is beyond the household at the time.

The central management and support costs include the organisational management functions, IT, and human resources support. Shelter seeks full cost recovery for its services based on the ACEVO[19] model.

Table 5.2: Breakdown of expenditure

	Actual 2003/04		Actual 2004/05		Budget 2005/06	
	£	%	£	%	£	%
Staff internal	184,346	62.3	193,477	63.0	216,574	70.9
Staff external	15,217	5.1	684	0.3	4,000	1.3
Staff-related	10,372	3.5	36,375	11.8	9,898	3.3
Total staff costs	209,935	70.9	230,534	75.1	230,472	75.5
Running costs	24,301	8.2	26,320	8.6	26,767	8.8
Support expenditure	24,089	8.1	19,601	6.4	16,002	5.2
Central management and support costs	37,608	12.7	30,625	10.0	32,138	10.5
Total expenditure	295,933	100.0	307,080	100.0	305,379	100.0

Source: Shelter (discrepancies are caused by rounding)

18. Shelter Inclusion Project accounts did not identify particular sources of funding in 2003/4; however, it is known that the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund contributed approximately £58,000, the Children's Fund £21,000, and that Supporting People represented about half of the overall income. In addition, the Homelessness Directorate contributed £50,000, and Shelter £6,000.
19. Association of Chief Executives of Voluntary Organisations.

Unit costs

Two main unit costs were calculated.

■ The cost per household month for 2003/04 and for 2004/05. This is calculated by dividing the expenditure in the year by the total number of months of contact with each household provided by the project during the year.

■ The average total cost per household leaving the project, for households whose cases were closed in 2003/04 and 2004/05.[20]

Further methodological details are provided in Appendix A.

Table 5.3 provides a summary of the activity data. It shows that the project provided 436 household contact months during 2003/04 and 375 household contact months during 2004/05. The frequency and intensity of contact with households each month is not known. Sixteen households left the project (ie their cases were closed) during 2003/04 and 25 during 2004/05.

The table also shows that the average duration of contact with the project was 9.3 months (with a range of 2 to 15 months) for those leaving the project in 2003/04 and 16.4 months (with a range of 4 to 27 months) for those leaving in 2004/05. It is not surprising that the average duration of contact is longer for those leaving in 2004/05, because some of these households had been involved in the project since its inception and required a longer period of contact with the project before their case could be closed.

In addition, the table provides a breakdown for each of the four service user categories. The small numbers mean that any generalisations should be made with considerable caution. However, the data suggest that lone adults are likely to have shorter contact times with the project than the other categories and that family groups may tend to require longer contact with the project. This is not surprising given the work carried out with children.

Table 5.3: Summary of activity data for households

Service user category	No.	Client months: 2003/04	Client months: 2004/05	Closed cases: 2003/04	Closed cases: 2004/05	Average contact duration: closed cases 2003/04 [range]	Average contact duration: closed cases 2004/05 [range]
Lone adults	21	76	96	8	4	9.4 mths [2–14]	10.8 mths [4–20]
Adult couples	3	20	30	0	1	n/a	19.0 mths [n/a]
Lone parents	33	195	157	7	10	12.7 mths [10–15]	15.0 mths [4–26]
Family groups	17	145	92	1	10	4.0 mths [n/a]	19.9 mths [7–27]
All clients	74	436	375	16	25	9.3 mths [2–15]	16.4 mths [4–27]

20. Therefore if 10 households were accepted by the Project on 1 April and all 10 cases were closed 12 months later on 31 March the following year, 120 client months would have been provided by the project. If the project had cost £240,000 to run for the year, then the average cost per client month would be £2,000 and the average cost per client would be £24,000.

Table 5.4: Some unit costs

All households	2003/04	2004/05
Average cost per household month	£679	£819
Average total cost per discharged household	£6,281	£11,902
Minimum total cost per discharged household	£1,358	£3,276
Maximum total cost per discharged household	£10,185	£19,873

Table 5.4 shows some unit costs based on the aggregated data for all households. The average cost per household month in 2003/04 was almost £680, compared with almost £820 in 2004/05.[21] The higher value in 2004/05 is due to the reduced number of household contact months during the year, not to greater expenditure. These costs result in an average cost for each household leaving the project in 2003/04 of about £6,280 (with a range of approximately £1,360–£10,190), compared with an average cost of about £11,900 for those leaving the project in 2004/05 (approximate range: £3,280–£19,870).[22]

Using the budgeted expenditure for 2005/06 of £305,379 and the fact that the project is staffed to manage a maximum of 33 households per month, the cost per household month in 2005/06 would be £771 if the project works at full capacity throughout the year. If the average contact time with the project is reduced to 12 months (eg by closing cases more efficiently), then the average total cost per household would be £9,254.

Therefore the average cost over the three financial years is around £9,000 per household. This cost could be lower if the length of contact with service users were reduced.

In order to estimate the cost of the project on an individual (rather than a household) basis, the calculations need to take into account the number of individuals in closed case households. **Table 5.5** calculates the project cost per person.

The average total cost per individual member of each household whose case was closed during 2003/04 was £2,716. The corresponding figure for 2004/05 was £3,381.[23]

Table 5.5: Calculation of project costs per person

	2003/04	2004/05
Average total cost per closed case	£6,281	£11,902
Number of cases closed during the year	16	25
Therefore total cost for all closed cases	£100,496	£297,550
Total number of individuals in closed case households	37	88
Therefore average total cost per person	£2,716	£3,381

21. These figures are calculated by dividing the expenditure for each year (see Table 5.2) by the number of client months provided during the year.
22. The total cost for each case closed during the year is calculated (using the relevant monthly unit costs) and then the average total cost is calculated for all of the cases closed during the year.
23. The project offered a service to the household and was commonly working with a number of members of each household, rather than one individual. However, not all members of the household were always engaged with the project.

Cost consequences and assessment of value for money

To determine whether or not the project delivers 'value for money' it is necessary to consider these incurred costs in the context of the wider costs to society (and, more narrowly, to the Exchequer) of failing to sustain vulnerable tenancies and failing to reduce or prevent some forms of antisocial behaviour.

Below, a review shows that preventing failed tenancies, family breakdown and homelessness, and encouraging children to attend school, can have significant financial benefits in terms of 'saving' costs that might otherwise have been incurred. Many of the benefits associated with the project will be enjoyed by adults as well as by children and young people, and some are expected to extend over a person's lifetime (and, indeed, may also extend to future generations).

Short term cost consequences

Tenancy sustainment
A recently published study on the use of possession actions and evictions by social landlords (Pawson et al, 2005) shows that although the vast majority of such evictions are triggered by rent arrears, a small proportion is to counter antisocial behaviour. It was estimated that the landlord costs to evict a tenant for rent arrears are £2,000–£3,000, rising to £6,500–£9,500 when the eviction is for antisocial behaviour. However, the authors feel that these figures are underestimates given weaknesses in landlords' cost-accounting methods.

The Audit Commission (1998) calculated that the costs to a housing authority of tenancy failure for vulnerable tenants living in the community was £2,100 per failed tenancy. Shelter estimated costs of £1,913 for 'standard' cases and £3,190 for 'complex' cases in 2003, while Crisis (2003) estimated the costs as ranging from £1,610–£4,210.

A housing association in the north-west of England recently calculated that preventing the eviction of a family saved them an average of £4,115 per household (court costs/legal fees of £500; rental loss of £390 based on an average void turnaround of 39 days and a rent of £65 per week; average re-let costs of £2,500 where the tenant is evicted; security costs of £120; and a saving of £605 in staff time through avoiding court preparation). The housing association pointed out that these figures are only estimates and also that they do not take into account the additional costs saved because the reduction in antisocial behaviour means that complainants do not terminate their tenancies.

Staff working in Rochdale did not know the local costs associated with terminating a tenancy. However, they estimated that the average cost per legal case is about £5,000, regardless of whether or not the tenants are evicted.

Antisocial behaviour
A significant review of the economic and social costs of antisocial behaviour was undertaken by Whitehead et al (2003). This study considered the costs of antisocial behaviour to a wide range of agencies, not just to housing authorities. The authors concluded that:

At the lower end, [unit] costs are of the order of £20–£50. At the upper end, there are examples of over £1m. For the vast majority of incidents where action is taken, however, the costs vary between £100 and £10,000. These are very general estimates based on estimates using widely varying approaches. They do not directly reflect costs of non-alleviation such as increased vacancies. Most importantly, they exclude any net costs to victims.

A day count of reports of antisocial behaviour undertaken by the Home Office's Anti-social Behaviour Unit in 2003 showed that 66,107 reports were made to the 1,500 participating organisations. It was estimated that antisocial behaviour on this day alone cost agencies in England and Wales at least £13.5 million, which equates to about £3.4 billion in a year. At a more local level, a study evaluating the costs of responding to and preventing antisocial behaviour in Rotherham MBC by Crowther and Formby (2004) estimated that the annual costs were at least £3.3 million and probably closer to £4.0 million.

By reducing criminal behaviour, schemes like this project have the potential to significantly reduce its associated costs. For example, a recent report by the Audit Commission (2004) on the reformed youth justice system includes a case study of a 15-year-old male teenager who has been involved in criminal behaviour. The case study includes some estimated costs associated with his behaviour, including approximately £13,000 associated with police time, Youth Offending Team (YOT) involvement and Court appearances relating to theft and taking a car, and approximately £51,500 for a six-month custodial sentence in a secure unit.

Foster and residential care for children

Although it is not possible to place a financial value on keeping a family together, the Personal Social Services Research Unit's (PSSRU) *Unit Costs of Health and Social Care 2004* (Curtis and Netten, 2004) estimates that the unit cost per child per week of foster care in 2003/04 was £438. This gives a cost of £22,776 over a full year (including a total of £13,208 for the boarding out allowance and administration).

Data from Rochdale show that the average weekly cost of a place in a Children's Home is £2,710 (with a cost of £2,239 for local provision and £3,266 for provision by other councils) and an average weekly cost for foster care for a child of £392 (£269 for local provision and £641 for provision by others). Therefore the average annual costs of a place in a Children's Home and of foster care are approximately £141,000 and £20,500 respectively.

It is, of course, not known what costs would have been incurred by any of the children in the participating families had the project not existed. However, it is possible that a small number of children may have been taken into care without the support of Shelter Inclusion Project and other agencies given the high level of child protection concerns among participating households (see Section 2).

Other potential cost consequences

Recent research into the Supporting People programme (Matrix Research and Consultancy, 2004) calculated that it delivered tangible benefits with a total estimated value of £81.56 million from the Supporting People expenditure on homeless families of £52 million per annum. This comprised benefits worth £45.92 million for homelessness/stable tenancies; £33.91 million for the reduced use of health services and £1.73 million of benefits for crime reduction.

However, the authors also cite evidence of many other benefits from working with homeless or potentially homeless families that cannot readily be assigned monetary values. These include greater stability, allowing families to stay together and dealing with other aspects of their lives such as education, unemployment, mental health problems and behavioural problems. Children's health and educational achievement may also improve, with long term benefits. For example, research reported by the National Audit Office (2005) shows that non-truants and occasional truants perform significantly better in GCSEs than persistent truants.

Potential longer term consequences

The financial costs of social exclusion
Members of families engaging in antisocial behaviour are likely to experience social exclusion. A study by Scott et al (2002) followed 142 children from an inner-London borough from the ages of 10 to 28 years. They were divided into three groups: 'no problems', 'conduct problems', and 'conduct disorder' (ie a persistent and pervasive pattern of antisocial behaviour in childhood or adolescence). By the age of 28, the mean individual total costs for each group were £70,019 for the 'conduct disorder' group, £24,324 for the 'conduct problem' group and £7,423 for the 'no problem' group. The study concluded that:

Antisocial behaviour in children is a major predictor of how much an individual will cost society. The cost is large and falls on many agencies, yet few agencies contribute to prevention, which could be cost-effective.

The costs of being 'NEET' at 16–18 years
A study by Godfrey et al (2002) estimated the additional costs that would be incurred by a defined group of 157,000 young people who were 'not in education, employment or training' (NEET) compared with the hypothetical situation that these young people had the same current and future experience as the rest of their contemporaries. The greatest costs were incurred by educational underachievement, underemployment and unemployment. Two specific case studies based on a hypothetical male and female teenager illustrate how costs can accumulate to about £300,000[24] over a person's lifetime.

Potential cost savings by Shelter Inclusion Project
Although determining the annual income and expenditure for a project and calculating some unit costs is relatively straightforward, identifying and quantifying the benefits is more complex. Some benefits can be given a financial value based on estimates of the short term costs that are saved by the Exchequer as a consequence of the intervention – such as the costs of a failed tenancy and the costs of placing a child in foster care. These benefits may occur in several local departments, organisations and agencies, including housing providers, social services, the NHS, education, Youth Justice and the police. The household may 'save' the costs associated with becoming statutorily homeless and of having to move into different accommodation. However, there will also be many wider benefits that cannot be readily quantified, such as the benefits of keeping a family together, improving an adult's employment prospects, and making a neighbourhood a safe and pleasant place to live.

Furthermore, there may be much longer term benefits from the interventions. The costs associated with social exclusion can be very high. Helping a child to stop truanting and return to school is likely to have lifelong benefits in terms of employment status and earnings opportunities. Addressing a mother's mental health problems may prevent subsequent major health problems and enable her to undertake training and/or become employed as well as helping her to be a more effective parent.

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24. This is the undiscounted value, and equates to about £84,000 when discounted at 6%. This means that a sum of £84,000 would be needed now to deliver £300,000 over the person's lifetime, if invested with a return of 6% per annum. Thus £84,000 is the Present Value of this income stream.

Figure 5.1 provides a case study of some of the potential savings from supporting a family where the mother is facing mental health problems and may not be able to sustain her tenancy and household without support. These could amount to about £150,000 over a six month period.

These considerations suggest that an average total cost of about £9,000 per participating household in Shelter Inclusion Project provides good value for money for the Exchequer and for society. Furthermore, it must be appreciated that this project has piloted a new and innovative way of working with perpetrators of antisocial behaviour, which has inevitably been a learning process. Over time it may be possible to reduce the unit costs by identifying more effective ways of working (eg by identifying which interventions work best).

Figure 5.1: Cost case study

Family X is headed by a lone parent with three children – a 15-year-old boy, a 12-year-old boy and an eight-year-old girl. The older boy is involved in car theft and burglary and the younger one is considered to be a serious 'nuisance' and likely to follow in his brother's footsteps. Both boys are frequent truants and the older one has been temporarily excluded several times. The girl is well behaved and attends school regularly. Their mother, who is unemployed, is experiencing mental health problems and is drinking heavily. The front garden has become a dumping ground for rubbish. The family is facing eviction because of the boys' behaviour and the state of the property.

If they are evicted, the following costs could be incurred during the first six months alone:

Court-related costs	£5,000[25]
Other eviction-related costs for landlord	£3,000[26]
Six months custodial sentence in a secure unit for the older boy	£50,000[27]
Six months in a specialist (out of area) children's home for the younger boy	£85,000[28]
Six months foster care for the girl	£7,000[29]
Total	**£150,000**

If Shelter Inclusion Project works with the family, some (or possibly all) of these short term costs will be avoided. Although some additional costs will be incurred – for example, to help the mother with her alcohol and mental health problems and to clear the garden – these will be relatively low compared with the longer term costs associated with not intervening to help the family.

25 Estimated by staff in Rochdale as the average cost per legal case.
26 This is an illustrative amount estimated from two sources:
  - Pawson (2005) estimated an average cost per eviction relating to antisocial behaviour of £6,500–£9,500 (which is believed by the researchers to be an underestimate). If £5,000 is deducted for the court costs, this suggests other eviction-related costs are £1,500–£4,500, and £3,000 is the mid-point of this range.
  - The data from the Housing Association in north-west England calculated that average re-let costs were about £2,500, plus rental loss of £390 and security costs of £120, giving a total of £3,010, which falls in the middle of the above range of £1,500–£4,500.
27 The Audit Commission (2004) estimated costs of £51,500 for a six month custodial sentence in a secure unit for a 15-year-old male case study.
28 Data from Rochdale show that the average weekly cost of a place in a children's home provided by other councils is £3,266 per week.
29 Data from Rochdale show that the average weekly cost for foster care for a child in the local area is £269 per week.

6 Conclusion

This final section assesses the extent to which Shelter Inclusion Project represents an effective model for addressing antisocial behaviour within a community context.

Shelter Inclusion Project: a new model for tackling antisocial behaviour

Interventions designed to combat antisocial behaviour at both the household and community level have been developed only recently and there are only a few initiatives that focus on resettlement and rehabilitation of the perpetrators of antisocial behaviour. Shelter Inclusion Project represents a unique model for addressing antisocial behaviour. The evaluation showed that several key aspects of the project's design contributed to the positive outcomes that it often delivered.

- **Voluntary sector management:** users, staff members and agencies considered the independence of the project to be essential to its success, in particular its ability to advocate on behalf service users.

- **Voluntary approach to participation:** households could choose whether to participate in the project or not. In practice, however, it was a challenge to ensure that households did not feel coerced into participating.

- **Floating support:** the delivery of a cross-tenure support service. A floating support model meant that workers could assist households with planned moves and continue to support them in new accommodation. Although only a couple of private tenants had been supported, and no owner-occupiers, this principle was in place and future referrals were expected to be more diverse.

- **A focus on antisocial behaviour and support issues:** the central focus of Shelter Inclusion Project's work was to address antisocial behaviour, both directly and indirectly, through the provision of wider support.

- **Working across many types of household and with all household members:** the project was able to support different types of households and work with people of any age. Work with children and young people was an integral part of the project, and was a highly valued aspect of the service.

- **Flexibility of approach:** the project offered a wide range of support to cater for individual needs. In addition, very practical benefits were provided alongside emotional support.

- **Inter-agency partnerships:** the project developed good inter-agency working with landlords, enforcement agencies and others, especially in terms of sharing information to maximise its effectiveness.

Meeting the project objectives

Shelter Inclusion Project had three objectives:

- to reduce antisocial behaviour

- to promote social inclusion and community stability

- to prevent eviction and provide a route back into settled housing.

This section considers the extent to which the project met these objectives.

Addressing antisocial behaviour

The project achieved considerable success in tackling antisocial behaviour. Seven in 10 closed cases – 71 per cent of 45 households – were reported as either having stopped being involved in antisocial behaviour or as having improved their behaviour. Formal tracking of 10 cases, however, showed that it sometimes took some time to address more severe antisocial behaviour.

Most service users were positive about the project and its impact on their capacity to manage antisocial behaviour. Service users said that the project had enabled them to better handle unwanted visitors or abusive or violent former male partners through improving their gate-keeping skills.

Where the service user was the perpetrator of antisocial behaviour, project workers helped with anger management, improving social support or helping with associated problems such as alcohol dependency. In many cases where a child, children or a young person was a perpetrator of antisocial behaviour, users often said that the efforts of the children's worker and assistance with parenting had helped to address underlying problems.

Success was not universal, but in most cases the project was effective in addressing antisocial behaviour. The situation and the prospects of a large number of the households with which the project worked had been improved by the roles the workers adopted in addressing antisocial behaviour and associated support needs.

Promoting social inclusion and community stability

While the project was a relatively small service, there was evidence that it had a positive impact on social inclusion. The project provided a holistic service to households, attempting to address longer term priorities of households and helping them live successfully within their communities.

For example, eight per cent of the supported adults secured employment, education or training during their time with the project, despite this not being a main focus of the project. The benefits of increased economic inclusion, with all of its attendant benefits in terms of social inclusion and reduced costs to the Exchequer, are clear.

There was also considerable success with children and young people experiencing difficulties at school or who were excluded from school. Ninety-one per cent of the children and young people showed an increase in educational attendance. Evidence on progress with older teenagers was more mixed, but there was evidence of their working effectively with other youth projects. The recent appointment of a Children and Young Person's Team Leader indicated that this work would be strengthened in the future.

It was more difficult to asses the contribution that Shelter Inclusion Project could make to wider community stability. The project did not have the resources to undertake community development work although this could be developed in the future. Nonetheless, agency representatives stated that the project, working alongside other services, was making a positive impact on the stability of deprived communities and helping reduce the 'social churning' caused by a rapid turnover of tenancies, because households who might otherwise have been evicted for antisocial behaviour were able to remain in their homes.

Preventing eviction and providing a route back into settled housing

There was evidence of success in preventing eviction. Project workers assessed 84 per cent of closed cases (38 out of 45) as no longer being at risk of homelessness and the available evidence from social landlords in the Rochdale Borough corroborated this finding. Households were more likely to sustain their tenancies following contact with the project. The project was particularly successful in respect of 14 households that had a history of homelessness.

It is clear that, alongside addressing antisocial behaviour, the project also helped counteract other risks to tenancy sustainment. The most significant area in this respect was debt management, with almost 50 per cent of closed case households making improvements in money management. In addition, individual support needs, which in a few cases included alcohol dependency or mental health problems, were in part addressed by workers making referrals to other agencies. This was something that could help address both antisocial behaviour and risks to a tenancy.

The project also assisted households by helping to address problems such as poor internal decoration or difficulties in managing the garden. This had a beneficial effect in making service users feel more positive about their homes and could also promote feelings of greater self-confidence that could lead to improvements in antisocial behaviour.

Overall assessment of success

The project met with considerable success over the pilot period. At the time the evaluation ceased, the project had enjoyed good inter-agency support at a local level and had already secured funding for its short term future. Beyond its successes with antisocial behaviour, the project was also effective in its ability to establish the respect and trust of social landlords, enforcement agencies and its service users, some of whom had difficulty dealing with other agencies.

Many service users had engaged with the project and accepted quite targeted work to address their antisocial behaviour within a supportive, no-blame culture. The project may not have been able to counter all antisocial behaviour successfully, but it made a positive and sustained contribution to addressing complex situations that benefited local communities. In addition, it was clear that there were potential cost savings associated with reduced antisocial behaviour and improved tenancy sustainment.

The project provided support to highly marginalised, vulnerable households, many of whom had fallen out with their neighbours, felt their own behaviour was out of control and were at risk of homelessness. Many households said the project had helped them regain control over their lives, and some had begun to gain a sense of self-respect and motivation that would help them lead a happier, more productive, and cooperative life.

The longer term impacts and associated cost savings of changing lives was more difficult to measure but were likely to be considerable, and attested to the value of the preventative nature of Shelter Inclusion Project.

Future of Shelter Inclusion Project

The project has been awarded ongoing Supporting People funding to cover two-thirds of its project costs. Grants from the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund and the Children's Fund are secure until 2008, and the project is seeking mainstream funding. The project aims to continue to build on its success, and future plans include:

- developing the children's service, and introducing Children and Young Persons' Forums to encourage feedback from this group

- working in partnership with black and minority ethnic housing associations

- developing a volunteer scheme to extend the capacity of the project

- continuing to promote the project in order to expand the range of referral agencies and therefore attract a more diverse range of service users.

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Appendix A: Research methods

A multi-method approach was utilised in the evaluation of Shelter Inclusion Project, as outlined below.

Collection of monitoring information

The evaluation team asked the project workers to complete a referral/assessment form, three-month review forms and an end of service form for each household. These forms were designed to provide basic statistical information on the households receiving the Shelter Inclusion Project service.

Further information was also collected from three sources.

- Referral forms from agencies to Shelter Inclusion Project provided additional detail on the antisocial behaviour in which households had been engaged.

- The research team supplemented the details recorded on the forms with some additional information the household gave during the interview (see 'Interviews with service users...' below).

- Information also came from local authority tenancy records on housing history and the nature of antisocial behaviour committed by the members of some households (see 'Collection of tracking information' below).

These various sources of information are brought together in the figures, tables and graphics presented in the report.

All households were asked to sign a consent form in order to allow the research team to collect and use the monitoring information. In order to maintain confidentiality, information about service users was also passed anonymously from the project to the research team. Households that did not wish to sign this consent form were not included in this element of the evaluation.

Interviews with service users, project staff and agency representatives

A total of 36 households participated in 47 interviews over the evaluation period, representing approximately half of all the households who used the project over the evaluation period. Interviews were undertaken in three tranches in summer 2003, 2004 and 2005. Households were invited to be interviewed once they had been using the project for at least four months. In addition, services users who had stopped using the project were also invited to be interviewed in 2004 and 2005: 15 of the 47 interviews represented closed cases. Six of the 15 closed households had been interviewed previously, allowing change over time to be considered.

Thirteen children and young people (aged between eight and 17) from four households, all of whom had direct experience of the project, were interviewed to gain their perspective of the support offered to both them and their parent/s.

Project staff members were interviewed on three occasions (in 2003, 2004 and 2005). This included the project manager, support workers and the children's/young people's workers. Agency representatives who had acted as referrers to the project and/or were working closely with Shelter Inclusion Project in delivering services to households were interviewed in 2003 and 2005. A total of 14 agency interviews were undertaken.

Collection of tracking information

Although the project monitoring information and interviews provided good quality data on service user satisfaction and progress during time with the project, it was necessary to collect additional data to assess antisocial behaviour and housing outcomes of service users fully. The research team therefore attempted to collect data on households for a five year period (October 2000–June 2005) to assess two key outcomes: changes in antisocial behaviour and changes in tenancy situation.

The Rochdale agencies that assisted this process were:

■ *Rochdale Boroughwide Housing and the Legal and Enforcement Team* – provided access to tenancy records covering the five year period, and the Legal and Enforcement Team provided information on a number of cases;

■ *Bowlee Housing Association* – as the second largest referrer to Shelter Inclusion Project, Bowlee HA authorised researchers to review the tenancy records for Shelter Inclusion Project users over the specified time period.

As with the project monitoring, informed consent to the collection and analysis of tracking information via the above agencies was sought from the households. Because this aspect of the evaluation was designed later in the research process, consent was more difficult to obtain from all users, particularly those who had already left the service, and it was only possible to obtain consent forms from 24 households for this part of the evaluation.

Legal and Enforcement records were held on 13 of the 24 households. In the case of the 11 remaining cases, there was no referral to Legal and Enforcement by the landlord. This did not mean that no antisocial behaviour was recorded, rather that it was not at a level where the housing provider referred the household.

Only 10 of the 13 households were accessible to the research team because, in two cases, the files related to antisocial behaviour committed by young people in the household who were now over the age of 18 (and therefore separate consent would have been required), and one case file was unavailable.

Information was also available on the tenancy files of 19 households. However, because the information from the Legal and Enforcement Team was much more reliable, it was decided to concentrate analysis on their 10 cases, with additional supporting information from tenancy records. It should be remembered, however, given the referral to the Legal and Enforcement Team, that these 10 cases tended to have been accused of more severe antisocial behaviour than other households involved with the project.

Cost appraisal

Shelter Inclusion Project provided the research team with details on income and expenditure for the pilot periods, in the form of monthly accounts.

Calculation of unit costs

Unit costs were calculated using start dates and, where relevant, close dates for the 74 households who were accepted by the project between October 2002 and 30 June 2005. These dates were used to determine the total numbers of households in contact with the project in each month.

For 2003/04 and 2004/05, the number of contact months for each household discharged during that year is summed and divided by the number of discharged households for that year to give the average number of contact months for cases discharged during the year.

The financial calculations use expenditure data from the accounts for 2003/04 and 2004/05 provided by Shelter. Specifically, the calculations are based on the total expenditure incurred on project-related activities in each year. The average cost per household month (the basic unit cost) for each of these two years is calculated by dividing the total cost for the year by the total number of household months (including those provided to households whose cases were not closed during the year under consideration) for the year.

The average cost per discharged household (the other key unit cost) is also calculated for households leaving the project in 2003/04 and in 2004/05. For those leaving the project in 2003/04, this is calculated by multiplying the total number of contact months with these households in 2002/03 and 2003/04 by the average cost per household month for 2003/04. It is assumed that the cost per household month in 2003/04 also applied to 2002/03. The resulting total cost is then divided by the number of households discharged during 2003/04 to give the average total cost per closed case for that year. No households left the project during 2002/03.

For those leaving the project in 2004/5, the average cost per discharged household is calculated by multiplying the total number of contact months in 2003/04 for these households by the average cost per household month for 2003/04 (where applicable). This is then added to the number of contact months in 2004/05 multiplied by the average cost per household month for 2004/05. The resulting total cost is then divided by the number of households discharged during 2004/05 to give the average total cost per closed case for that year.

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