

Shelter Inclusion Project

Managing antisocial behaviour in the community:
five years on



Shelter

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This document contains information and policies that were correct at the time of publication.

To protect the identity of Shelter clients, models have been used in photographs and names have been changed.

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Introduction

Shelter Inclusion Project is an innovative, integrated support-based service addressing antisocial behaviour throughout the borough of Rochdale. It offers a process of early intervention as well as measures to tackle more entrenched antisocial behaviour. Single people, with or without children, are supported alongside families.

The service delivers a multidisciplinary package of support based on a 'whole household' approach. This means that adults and children, siblings, spouses or partners of those involved in antisocial behaviour, all benefit from the service, as does the community at large.

Shelter Inclusion Project demonstrates how meeting the support needs of households can reduce levels of antisocial behaviour and people's subsequent risk of homelessness and social exclusion. The service has been running for five years, and evaluations of it consistently show it to be successful in reducing antisocial behaviour and advancing tenancy sustainment as a result.

The aims of the service are:

- to reduce antisocial behaviour
- to promote social inclusion and community stability
- to prevent eviction and provide a route back to settled housing.



Delivering on strategic priorities

Shelter Inclusion Project delivers across a range of strategic priorities. The outcomes delivered by the service directly meet the Government's Respect agenda, its Homelessness Prevention agenda, Parenting agenda, community cohesion in neighbourhoods and the five 'Every Child Matters' outcomes. One of the greatest strengths of this service is its cross-cutting relevance to priorities that the Local Strategic Partnership has decided upon. A typical service user would be someone involved in antisocial behaviour, predominantly from one of the 22 most deprived wards in the borough, with drug and alcohol issues and/or mental health problems, who is at risk of homelessness and who has children missing out on their education.

'Can you imagine starting at the top of this building and slowly tumbling down to the bottom and having nobody, and then having someone to catch you and help you back to the top? That's what they did.'

A service user

Shelter Inclusion Project delivers locally on priorities outlined in Rochdale Borough's Local Area Agreement (LAA):

- promoting synergy through cross-cutting activity to deliver on all four blocks. This includes housing, one of the common grounds across all four LAA blocks and Supporting People
- developing and promoting cohesion and culture
- narrowing the gap (working predominantly in the 22 most deprived neighbourhoods)
- being a voluntary-sector provider working with young people.

In particular, the service creates safer and stronger communities by:

- reducing homelessness
- reducing crime and improving community safety

- building respect in, and for, communities, and reducing antisocial behaviour
- reducing harm caused by alcohol and drugs
- empowering people to make positive change
- improving quality of life and reducing the gap.

It also helps local jobs and prosperity by:

- increasing service users' employment opportunities
- increasing service users' skills.

Shelter Inclusion Project sets out to keep children and young people safe, healthy, educated, participating, and helps to equip them to be economically successful as adults, by delivering on all five 'Every Child Matters' outcomes:

- to be protected from harm and feel safe
- to be healthy
- to have opportunities to do well (enjoy and achieve)
- to make a positive contribution
- to achieve economic well-being.



People helped over the past five years

Households were supported wherever they lived in the Rochdale borough. Service users were homeowners as well as tenants in social housing or the private rented sector.

- 430 individuals have been supported. These were individuals and families living in 148 households throughout the Rochdale borough.
- 252 children and young people have benefited from the service. 123 of these received one-to-one support from a Children and Young Persons' Worker.

All households have contained at least one person involved in antisocial behaviour. Over a third of households included more than one individual involved in antisocial behaviour.

'At one time it was just a free for all in here 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.'

A service user

A number of families have been identified who have required a more intensive service, which has led to the development of a complementary service – the Rochdale Borough Families Project.



Outcomes of the service at Year 5

The agencies engaged with Shelter Inclusion Project consistently cite its 'whole household' approach as one of the biggest benefits of the service.

- 91 per cent of households using the service ceased their antisocial behaviour altogether – a longer-term outcome, since this includes no re-occurrence of antisocial behaviour in cases that were closed four years ago.
Source: data provided by Rochdale Boroughwide Housing Legal Services and Enforcement Team, and landlords of households whose cases were closed over the past five years, 2007
- 86 per cent of households stayed in the same home at least two years after their case was closed.
Source: Shelter Inclusion Project database, 2007
- 10 individuals in receipt of benefits gained employment during the past couple of years (2005 to 2007) – a high-level indicator of improvements in social inclusion. Other service users have entered training or started to work as volunteers.
Source: Shelter Inclusion Project database, 2007
- 91 per cent of children who received direct support with their education showed an improvement in their school attendance.
Source: *Addressing antisocial behaviour: an independent evaluation of Shelter Inclusion Project*, Shelter, University of York and the Housing Corporation, 2006
- In its five-year operation, there has only been one eviction of a household using the service. This was for mortgage arrears.
Source: data provided by Rochdale Boroughwide Housing Legal Services and Enforcement Team, and landlords of households whose cases were closed over the past five years, 2007

'We've got people working with children and young people, working with the parents, in terms of the multi-skills that are there and someone for everyone. From what I see it's excellent, and I like it because it's addressing the whole of the household unit rather than just one person in the household.'

An agency representative



How Shelter Inclusion Project works

Shelter Inclusion Project works with up to 33 households at any one time, cases lasting 12 months on average. The ratio of staff to service user is about 1:11. The service employs nine staff, including a Manager, four Support Workers (two full-time and two part-time), a Team Leader, two Children and Young Persons' Workers (part-time), and an Administrative Assistant (part-time).

All households are allocated a Support Worker. A Children and Young Persons' Worker will be assigned to them where the antisocial behaviour relates specifically to younger members of the household. The service is based in the centre of Rochdale yet works throughout the borough. People continue to live in their communities and are supported mainly in their own homes.

Referrals to Shelter Inclusion Project come from a range of agencies including the local authority Housing and Homelessness offices, the antisocial behaviour Case Intervention Group, Greater Manchester Police, the Community Mental Health Team, Youth Offending Team, Community Drug Team, and Rochdale Boroughwide Housing's Legal Services and Enforcement Team. The service also encourages people to self-refer directly.

The referral criteria are that households:

- live, or present themselves as homeless, in the Rochdale borough
- have a history of antisocial behaviour
- want to be supported by the service.

Priority is given to people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness and to households with complex needs (ie trouble with addiction, mental health problems, children excluded from school).

Main types of support offered includes:

- help to manage bills, money and debts
- support to address specific acts of antisocial behaviour
- a clear explanation of the enforcement action underway, and likely consequences of any breach
- help to claim benefits

- liaison with schools about attendance problems
- help to develop or improve parenting skills
- the provision of vouchers that can be redeemed at mainstream DIY stores for decorating materials, free tool hire, and help with home decoration or gardening
- help to control pets, access to dog obedience classes and referral to pet neutering services.

'[A 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.'

An agency representative



Service to children and young people

Shelter Inclusion Project is committed to tackling antisocial behaviour, whatever the type of household. Throughout its five-year operation, the service has always been delivered to a mix of individuals and families. However, the services designed for children, and particularly provided to teenagers, have been stepped up in response to feedback from service users and stakeholders.

'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 [the worker] suggested like making them sit on the naughty step or stopping them from watching telly.'

A service user

Currently, the following services are open to families supported by Shelter Inclusion Project:	
Work with children and young people	Work with whole family
Improving school attendance.	One-to-one parenting support.
Appropriate behaviour.	Referral to parenting courses.
Referral to specialist health services, including mental health services for children and adolescents.	Breaking domestic violence cycles.
Peer mentoring for those at risk of receiving ASBOs.	Building positive relationships within families.
Fire safety and addressing tendencies to start fires.	Communicating with school.
Anti-bullying.	Promoting positive behaviour.
Addressing self-harm.	Accessing drug and alcohol services.
Cultural awareness, diversity and difference.	Being a positive role model.
Appropriate and safe relationships with peers.	Family activities.
Child and youth advocacy.	
Road safety.	
Action planning with positive activity rewards.	



Involvement of service users

The service has always encouraged people's independence, empowerment and involvement. As part of this, its users are invited to contribute meaningfully to the development of the service.

The following areas for development were identified by service users in their feedback to Shelter Inclusion Project, and their suggestions have informed the way the service has progressed:

Suggested development	Outcome
Parenting skills.	All service staff trained in Webster-Stratton parenting techniques. Parenting group set up and ongoing. Increased referrals to parenting courses.
Activities for young people.	Snowboarding, rock climbing, canoeing, kayaking, cinema trips and multimedia projects. Peer mentoring for those at risk of an ASBO. Young people's opinion forum .
Decorating.	Free vouchers supplied to service users for decorating materials. Decorating tool-hire accessed free of charge. Help to decorate one room.



Independent evaluation of Shelter Inclusion Project's three-year pilot

An independent evaluation of the pilot phase of this service was carried out by the Centre for Housing Policy at the University of York, and funded by the Housing Corporation. The evaluation found a large number of enforcement actions being taken initially to deal with antisocial behaviour, noting high levels of social exclusion and a history of insecure housing.

Households had been subject to enforcement actions for antisocial behaviour, including written and verbal warnings, evictions, injunctions and ASBOs. Thirty-five per cent of actions had been taken against more than one individual in a household. This included families where both parents and children were involved in antisocial behaviour.

Reported antisocial behaviour included noise nuisance, vandalism, youth nuisance, criminal activity, neighbour disputes and hoarding rubbish.

Children were often experiencing disruption with their education, including instances of truanting and exclusion from school. Twenty-four per cent of children of school age were either temporarily or permanently excluded or missing a significant amount of schooling.

Almost all the households were economically inactive at the point of referral. Thirty-eight per cent of them had two or more debts.

The majority of households were facing homelessness when referred to Shelter Inclusion Project:

- 89 per cent were at risk of losing their home
- 38 per cent had been homeless at least once before.

Service users were experiencing social exclusion and had high support needs. More than half the households contained an adult suffering depression or other mental health problems. Drug and alcohol dependency among adults was a problem in 23 per cent of households, while 28 per cent of households included an adult with a limiting illness or disability.

During the three-year pilot of the service child protection concerns were raised in relation to 20 per cent of households, children being placed on the child protection register in six of the cases following intervention by Shelter Inclusion Project.

'They made me more confident... helped me manage things myself instead of turning to the bottle – I'd be off my head and shouting at the kids when they hadn't done anything... If it hadn't been for Shelter and the council I could have been suicidal or in prison... I could have been dead or in prison, and my kids in care, because it was getting to that stage.'

A service user

Cost savings

Not preventing antisocial behaviour costs more in the longer term because it can lead to homelessness, ill-health, social exclusion, educational underachievement and unemployment. It has been estimated, for example, that the costs to a landlord to evict a tenant for antisocial behaviour are between £6,500 and £9,500.¹ And research into the Supporting People programme² calculated that it delivered tangible benefits with an estimated value of £81.56 million from the Supporting People expenditure on homeless families of £52 million per annum.

Preventing homelessness and encouraging children to attend school brings wider benefits to society, especially in terms of employment and earning potential. A 2002 study by Scott et al³ showed that the costs to society, in particular to the penal and benefits systems, for children who exhibited a persistent and pervasive pattern of antisocial behaviour in childhood or adolescence, were nearly 10 times higher than for children who exhibited no problems.

1. Pawson, H et al. *The Use of Possession Actions and Evictions by Social Landlords*, ODPM (renamed Communities and Local Government), London, 2005.
2. *Matrix Research and Consultancy, Supporting People: Benefits Realisation of the Supporting People Programme*, ODPM (now CLG), London, 2004.
3. Scott, S et al. 'Financial Cost of Social Exclusion: follow-up study of antisocial behaviour children into adulthood', *British Medical Journal*, Volume 323, pages 191-194, 2002.

How the service is operating now

Shelter Inclusion Project now works alongside Rochdale Borough Families Project. This provides a continuum of services, ranging from early intervention measures that are designed to prevent antisocial behaviour and promote social inclusion, to those that deal with the most entrenched antisocial behaviour.

The independent evaluation of Shelter Inclusion Project's first three years identified areas it could progress further:	
Suggested development from independent evaluation at end of pilot project	How this has been met at year 5 of the service
To further develop the children's service, and introduce children and young persons' forums to encourage feedback from this group.	Peer-mentoring project set up, with activities targeted at 13-year-olds and older. Child forum (Kids Opinion Club) and youth forum (Activ8) established.
To work in partnership with black and minority ethnic housing associations.	Referrals now received from black and minority ethnic housing associations.
To develop a volunteer scheme to extend the capacity of the project.	Service-user involvement greatly expanded. Service-user group and parents' group established alongside a buddying scheme for encouraging new members.
To promote the project in order to expand the range of referral agencies and therefore attract a more diverse range of service users.	Two 'development weeks' held. Diversity of referrals now improved.

'Whole household' approach

Shelter Inclusion Project is effective because of its multidisciplinary 'whole household' approach.

A Support Worker stabilises the household situation and then addresses the causes of the antisocial behaviour. At the same time, a Children and Young Persons' Worker will provide support with parenting and meets the needs of the children. It is precisely these things happening simultaneously, and support treated in an integrated way, that brings about positive long-term outcomes.

Local support and funding

The work of the service is funded by Supporting People, the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund, the Children's Fund and the Respect Task Force. It is supported by Rochdale Local Strategic Partnership and Shelter.

Post April 2008, Shelter Inclusion Project's multi-agency steering group is seeking for the service to be commissioned via Rochdale Local Area Agreement.



Case studies

Case study one

Due to complaints of noise nuisance, a family were referred to Shelter Inclusion Project by their housing association. The household comprised mum, stepdad and two children – Katie, aged 11, and eight-year-old Ryan. The assessment uncovered that the noise nuisance was due to the mother's chaotic alcohol use that led her to become aggressive. The mother, herself, also identified that she needed help with parenting. There were also groups of youths gathering outside the house who were drinking. Neighbours found this very intimidating and disruptive.

The children's needs were addressed through the support provided to them alongside their parents. By building up trust with Ryan, it emerged that he was involved in theft and had also started setting fire to things. Shelter's Children and Young Persons' Worker tackled this through a raft of interventions that identified the reasons for his fire-starting, how he could deal with peer pressure, keep safe and make appropriate choices, improving Ryan's self-esteem.

Mum was referred to an alcohol-detox programme. She completed this and her aggressive behaviour ceased. The process also helped mum to stop her home being used as a drinking place for groups of young people.

Mum did not want to attend the local parenting course. Instead, Shelter's Children and Young Persons' Worker delivered the parenting course to her directly. This enabled her to set boundaries within the family for the first time, establishing a regular bedtime routine. She stopped using inappropriate and negative language with the children and began to promote positive behaviour instead.

The outcomes for the family have been immense. Ryan has ceased stealing and setting fires. Mum feels more confident about her parenting and has also started a college course. The complaints have all ceased and no further antisocial behaviour has been recorded for more than six months.



Case studies

Case study two

The household consisted of mum (Debbie), dad (Paul) and 15-year-old son (Mark). Paul had been in contact with the area's Housing Officer, asking for help with his son's behaviour. Mark was causing damage to the property and was involved in youth nuisance on the estate. The group of youths he associated with were causing general intimidation, but it was felt that Mark was a particularly vocal member of this group.

Mum was housebound with severe depression and anxiety. Mark was diagnosed with behaviour problems and found it difficult to manage his anger in particular. The parents were concerned about their son's drug use and also felt unable to cope with his behaviour. They wanted their son taken away and put into care.

Shelter's Support Worker co-ordinated the package of intervention for the family. The worker accessed appropriate drug support for Mark and liaised with specialist mental health agencies to arrange support for his mum. Shelter also arranged for one room of the house to be decorated. This gave the family a visual sign of the improvement that was underway.

The Shelter Children and Young Persons' Worker provided a high level of support to Mark and his parents. In particular, the Support Worker encouraged the parenting skills of Mark's father. Paul was referred to attend a mainstream parenting course, but was unable to complete it due to mobility issues. Therefore the Children and Young Persons' Worker, on a one-to-one basis in the family home, delivered the 'Surviving your teenager' course directly to him. This also enabled mum to dip into the course as her mental health allowed.

Paul remained fully engaged throughout the six months of service provision, taking an active role in communicating with the school about his son's vocational course. It was this involvement, along with support provided by Shelter's Children and Young Persons' Worker, that helped the family to communicate effectively around Mark's education.

Paul took part in service-user involvement at Shelter Inclusion Project, attended events and engaged in positive activities that were set up for him and his son. The relationship between mother and son

improved, and both parents began to feel more confident in their parenting. There have been no further reports of antisocial behaviour in the 12 months since their support ended.



Everyone should have a home

We are the fourth richest country in the world, and yet millions of people in Britain wake up every day in housing that is run-down, overcrowded, or dangerous. Many others have lost their home altogether. Bad housing robs us of security, health, and a fair chance in life.

Shelter helps more than 170,000 people a year fight for their rights, get back on their feet, and find and keep a home. We also tackle the root causes of bad housing by campaigning for new laws, policies, and solutions.

Our website gets more than 100,000 visits a month; visit www.shelter.org.uk to join our campaign, find housing advice, or make a donation.

**We need your help to continue our work.
Please support us.**

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