Supporting People Strategy for Merton

www.merton.gov.uk

2005-2010

supportingpeople
supporting independence

merton
moving ahead

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1.   **Foreword**

We are delighted to introduce the five-year strategy for the Supporting People programme in Merton. The strategy is intended to be a definition and route map for the Supporting People service in the borough. This is a vital piece of our planning for housing and care services in Merton and it is particularly important as our Supporting People services are directly targeted to people who need help, advice and ongoing support to live as independently as possible in the community. Our plan has links with other housing, social care and health agendas and overall, we welcome the clarity that we are seeking for services for vulnerable people and their housing-related support.

We acknowledge that the introduction of the Government's Supporting People programme has represented a fundamental change in the way in which housing-related support services are funded, planned and delivered at a local level. Merton is just one of the 150 administering authorities for Supporting People in England, but we share the Government's view that this national agenda for Supporting People can make a significant difference to the life chances of some of the most vulnerable people in our community.

Our strategy builds on the work of the Supporting People agenda in Merton since the implementation of the national programme from April 2003. This strategy is based on new information and analysis about existing services and needs, as well as consultation with providers and service users. We know that there will be areas where further analysis of needs and information may be required and we want to see our strategy as being open to change, flexible, and in the main adaptable to the changing needs and aspirations of service users.

At the heart of the Supporting People programme in Merton, therefore, is a cross-cutting agenda that links into a number of health, housing, social care and probation services. Our local programme will also act as a vehicle for the delivery of a range of national targets in relation to supported housing services and the national Supporting People programme.

We know that one of our biggest challenges will be to work creatively within the funding resources that are available for the programme. This means that our programme must reflect a true and honest partnership with service providers in terms of delivery and value for money.

The strategy builds on a record of strong and successful partnerships in the borough and we recognise that working across boundaries, seeking shared service planning and agreed outcomes with other organisations, is more important than ever. We strongly endorse working with our partner local authorities in the South-West London Housing Partnership and we are committed to joint commissioning arrangements for new supported housing developments as well as co-operative working strategies within the seven boroughs in the sub-region.

In introducing the strategy to you, we want to profile the vision for Supporting People in Merton.
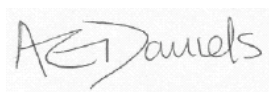
"To enable vulnerable people to maximise their independence, building safe and fulfilling lives in the community through support to their housing circumstances that meets their needs".

The council's overall vision is to make Merton "a great place to live, work and learn" and we accept our responsibilities in trying to ensure that our overall vision has an emphasis and reaches all parts of our community. The Supporting People five-year strategy provides the platform for inclusion into the council's overall agenda.

We would like to acknowledge and appreciate the services provided by all the providers and support agencies in the borough, delivering the Supporting People programme to residents. It is their efforts that will underpin the quality and value of this programme towards people in the borough. We must not leave the people who receive these services out of the equation. We value your views on services and want to see your influence about the Supporting People programme grow and increase over the next five years. We will be doing much more over this next period to enhance our communication in a variety of ways within Merton.

Our strategy has set out a clear plan of action to deliver and improve the Supporting People programme in the borough. We will celebrate success when we achieve our outcomes and we will evidence how people's lives have been improved through this programme.
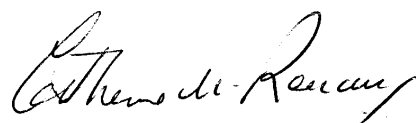
Finally, we always welcome feedback and comments. The strategy will be available on the Council's website at www.merton.gov.uk/housing policy and the strategy will also be distributed in a variety of formats and languages in the borough.

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2. Executive Summary

2.1 This is the five-year strategy for the Supporting People programme in the London Borough of Merton. Supporting People services provide housing-related support to vulnerable people to enable them to live independently or gain access to secure housing. The programme works as a partnership of local government, key stakeholders such as the local health service and probation, service providers and support agencies, service users – in effect all combining under the leadership of the Council as the administering authority for Supporting People. The programme funds services for a diverse range of people including – homeless people, older people, people with learning disabilities, people with physical and mental health issues, and young people leaving care.

2.2 The programme in Merton is managed by the council as the local administering authority, but is reliant on joint strategic direction with the council, local health services and probation being the key agencies that determine the shape and strategic direction of the programme. The council at Member level is responsible as the corporate body overseeing the full programme. The governance arrangements for Supporting People in Merton are set out within our strategy.

2.3 The strategy is based on needs analysis carried out during 2004/2005 and has been informed by census information, ongoing research, professional views, service providers and service users.

2.4 For Merton, the vision for Supporting People is:

"To enable vulnerable people to maximise their independence, building safe and fulfilling lives in the community through support to their housing circumstances that meets their needs".

2.5 Reflecting our local strategic agenda there are seven key objectives that will support achievement of our overall vision:

a) Improve the needs analysis with a special emphasis on people excluded from services and services to the BME community

b) Improve our partnership working with service providers, stakeholders, support agencies and service users

c) Work with other boroughs to develop accessible services for people across borough boundaries

d) Increase resources towards generic floating support services and get the balance right between accommodation-based services and floating support

e) Improve communications with an emphasis towards service-users and access to services

f) Set high standards for quality and value for money in the service review programme and performance monitoring

g) Use the budget creatively, linking with other funding streams for multi-dimensional needs and ensure the overall programme is cohesively linked into other corporate plans and wider partnerships.

2.6   Our action plan to achieve this local strategic agenda and meet these key objectives is attached as Appendix 2. The action plan will be monitored on a quarterly basis and an annual review will be undertaken.

2.7   The Supporting People allocation for Merton in 2005/06 is £3,345,767. The administration grant for the council as the administrating authority is £141,362 for 2005/06. The allocation represents a 5% reduction on the previous year and the administration grant represents a 20% reduction on the previous year, so strategy planning is framed within a difficult set of resource constraints that have forced reconsideration of spending priorities within a value for money framework in the period of this strategy. The strategy has concentrated on how best use can be made of the Supporting People allocation against our local strategic priorities that define our service improvement agenda, increasing access to services, and in particular, ensuring that the programme is reaching those in the highest need and service priority areas. The service will continue to review individual allocations in line with government guidance and in line with best value principles around quality, choice and value for money and performance. Over the five-year period the strategy will be a continuously developing agenda, adapting to changes and needs, provider performance, and central government and local priorities. The resource allocation for Merton will be viewed in a five-year context and this will enhance the longer-term approach to planning and developing services.

2.8   Our analysis of supply against need shows that for many client groups the supply is below what would be expected for a borough like Merton. However, the funding position in Merton, at least for the next two financial years means that it will not be possible to address all expressed need. Within strategic and service development, the Commissioning Body has identified the following client groups as representing the highest priority within the next five years:

Drugs and Alcohol
There are currently no dedicated supported housing services in Merton for residents with drug misuse problems. There is no provision in Merton (for Merton residents) of supported housing for post detoxification programmes. The supply of supported accommodation is below the expected supply. The supply of floating support services to this client group is at the lower end of the ODPM supply profile. The South-West London Cross Authority Group has agreed that this is a client group for whom cross authority service provision will be required. The London Supporting People Strategy has identified that in South-West London, need exceeds supply for this cross authority group.

Offenders
The supply of supported accommodation is below the expected supply.
The South-West London Cross Authority Group has agreed that this is a client group for whom cross authority service provision will be required. The London Supporting People Strategy has identified that in South-West London, need exceeds supply for this cross authority group.

Domestic Violence
The number of bed spaces is below the lower end of the ODPM supply profile. The South-West London Cross Authority Group has agreed that this is a client group for whom cross authority service provision will be required. The London Supporting People Strategy has identified that in South-West London, need exceeds supply for this cross authority group.

Young people leaving care/Young people at risk
There is a need for floating support provision in this area given that it is not policy to put groups of children leaving care together and therefore they would not be placed in clusters of supported accommodation.

Extra Care Housing for Older People

Generic Floating Support Services
Consultation with stakeholders has highlighted the desire to see an increased number of floating support services. There are a number of client groups that could benefit from such a service. It is anticipated that an increase in this type of service will be achieved through some disinvestment in current services, which at present are less able to promote independence.

The 5-year strategy and action plan reflects this reshaping of priorities within the Supporting People programme in Merton.

2.9   This document consists of four parts:

Part 1 sets out the context within which the strategy has been developed. It includes the national and regional context for Supporting People, the local context within which Merton operates and local demographic information.

Part 2 provides the overall vision and objectives for the Supporting People programme in Merton, information about the supply of services and details of supply gaps, or needs. Part 2 also outlines the priorities for Merton.

Part 3 gives information about the resources available to deliver current services and to develop future services.

Part 4 provides the detail of the 5-year action plan and the way in which the strategy will be delivered, developed and monitored.

PART 1

3.   **Putting the Strategy in context**

The local strategy makes most sense when considered in a wider context, which consists of both the Supporting People programme itself, at local through to national level, and the interaction of Supporting People and other strategies and plans. The diagram below illustrates this:
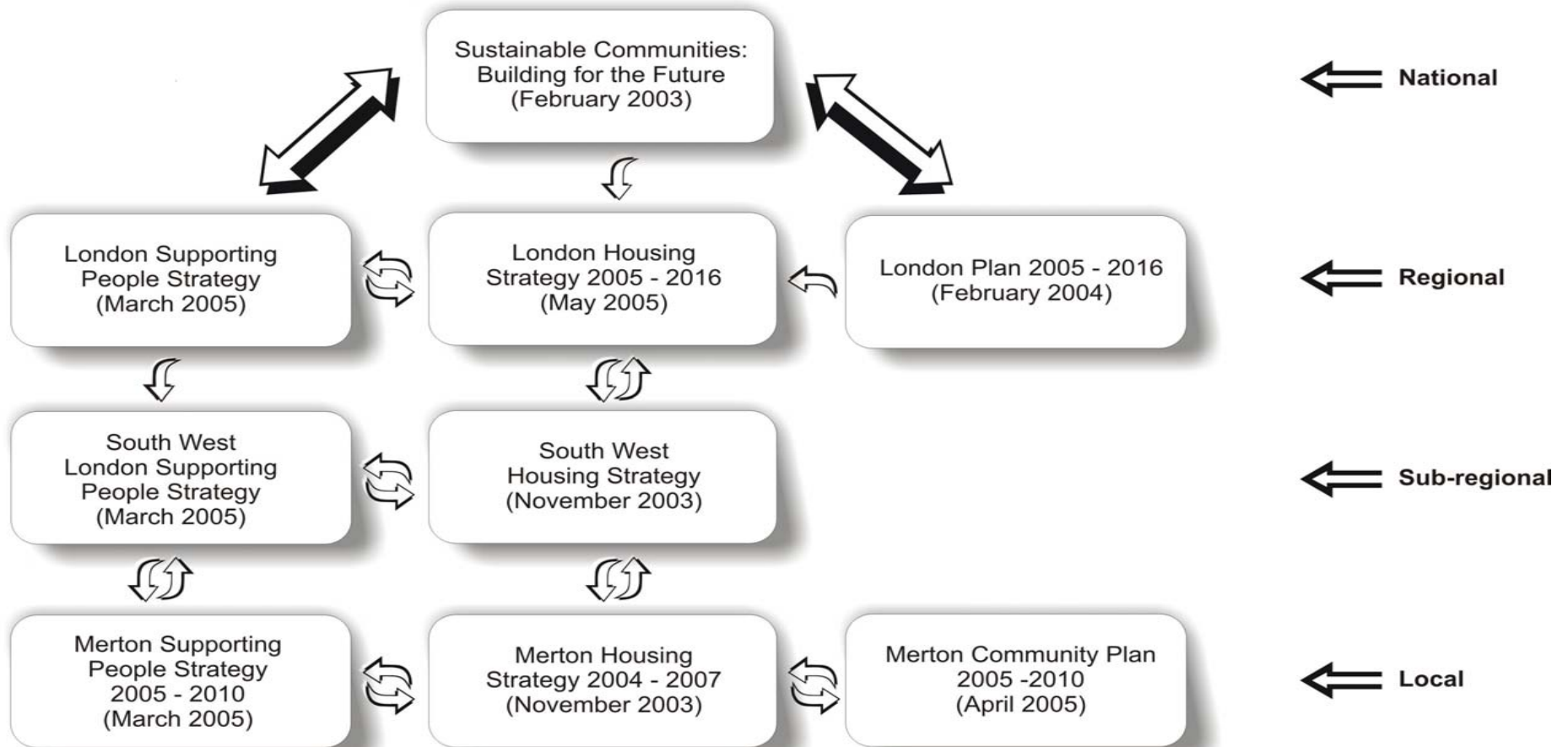
3.1   National Context

3.1.1   The Supporting People programme is committed to ensuring that vulnerable people have the opportunity to live more independently. Through working partnerships with local government, service users and support agencies, it promotes straightforward, cost-effective and reliable housing-related solutions which complement available care services and support independent living. Listed below are *some* examples of what local authorities are able to fund under Supporting People:

- Help older people remain in their own home as long as they wish to by funding visiting support services;
- Help young people leaving care prepare for greater independence through training in basic skills such as cooking and hygiene;
- Help people leaving institutions (e.g. prison) or who have been homeless set up home;
- Offer supported housing for people with learning difficulties who can move out of institutional care and into the community if they are helped to;
- Provide support for women fleeing domestic violence who need refuge accommodation, then access to longer term housing;
- Support for people with long term mental health problems who can move out of hospital if regular support is provided to help them cope with living independently.

3.1.2   In Merton, the Supporting People service complements a range of other government and local agendas:

- Crime and Disorder Strategies
- The Local Strategic Partnership – the Merton Partnership
- The Homelessness Strategy
- The Community Plan
- Health Improvement
- Neighbourhood Renewal
- Dealing with Social Exclusion

3.1.3   The aim of the Supporting People programme is to improve the quality of support to vulnerable people. It aims to do this in several ways:

- Focusing provision on *local* need
- Improving the range and quality of services
- Integrating housing related support with wider local strategies
- Monitoring quality and effectiveness
- Introducing effective decision making and administration

3.1.4   The Supporting People programme offers vulnerable people the opportunity to improve their quality of life by providing positive services, which enable them to have greater independence and control in making choices within their lives. The programme promotes housing related support services, which are cost effective, robustly funded and planned using a co-ordinated approach. Supporting People is driven by a working partnership of local government, the NHS, the National Probation Service, service users and support agencies. Local government has a key role through the management and administration of the local service programme and budget but this is being achieved in local areas through a joint service approach on commissioning and development of services.

3.1.5   This approach is designed to achieve the following outputs:

- a focus on needs led provision at local and national level;
- wider choice and range of demonstrably high quality services for vulnerable people;
- integrated strategies at a local and national level where the Supporting People programme facilitates the delivery of key Health and Community Safety agendas;
- monitoring, inspection and review of the quality and effectiveness of services;
- a framework to allow effective decision making and administrative processes to take place.

3.1.6   In Merton, Supporting People is viewed as a key driver in combating social exclusion. The council recognises that an effective programme for Supporting People in the borough will address individual needs but also promote the capacity of people and communities. This should be beneficial for the black and minority ethnic communities in addressing their needs. The council recognises however that exclusion manifests itself in a number of ways. The aim of the five-year strategy is to provide a means to effectively use the available resources – setting priorities and spending money that is matched against existing and emerging needs. Measuring performance, reshaping services and gaining successful outcomes will be the determining features of the programme in Merton with an emphasis on enriching the lives of people in the borough.

3.2   London – the regional and sub-regional context

3.2.1   Under the auspices of the Association of London Government (ALG), a London Supporting People Strategy is being developed for 2005-2010. The final strategy will be endorsed by a range of organisations including the ALG Leaders Committee, the Greater London Authority (GLA), the ODPM, London's Supporting People Commissioning Bodies, London Probation, London Housing Board, Housing Corporation, London Housing Federation, Government Office for London, Department of Health.

3.2.2   The total value of the Supporting People programme in London in 2004/2005 is £370m. A London Strategy is seen as essential in providing a vision for the programme as a whole in the capital. The highlighting of areas for partnership working and joint commissioning are key elements. This includes the four client groups identified by central government as likely to require cross-authority services:

- single homeless
- those at risk of domestic violence
- people at risk from drugs and alcohol
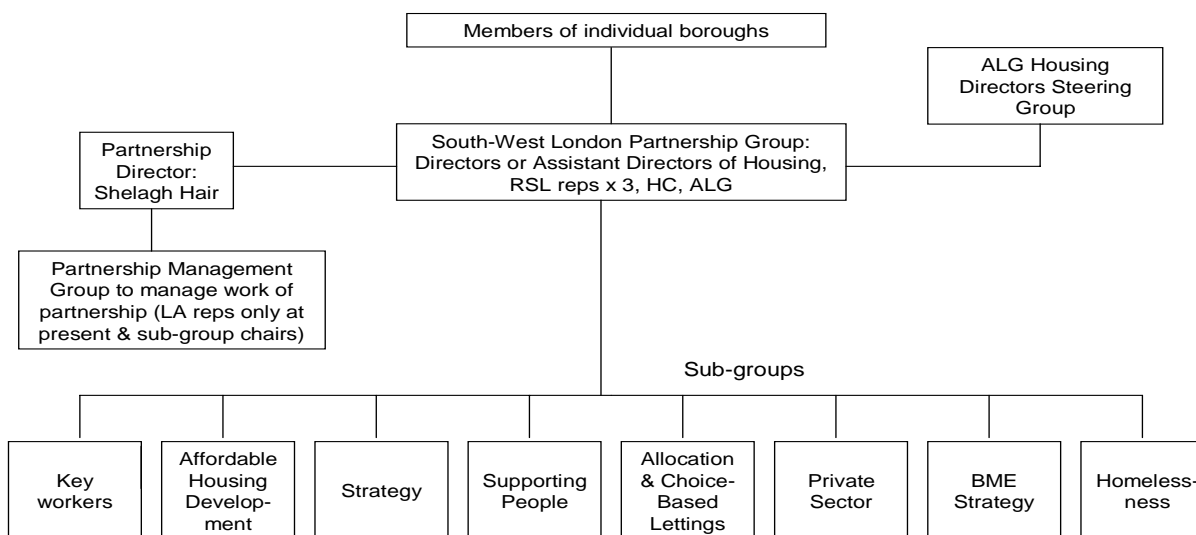- offenders and those at risk of offending

3.2.3   Equally, the draft London Supporting People Strategy is concerned with the need to accommodate investment in the new growth areas including the Thames Gateway.

3.2.4   The Government's Communities Plan in 2003 set out a requirement for new regional housing boards, and Merton being within the remit of the London Housing Board. This Board is responsible for the delivery of the overall strategic agenda for housing in a regional context and for allocating finance, particularly for new affordable housing. The Board published its first London Housing Strategy – 'Homes and Communities in London' in July 2003 and consultation is now under way on a London Housing Strategy for 2005-2015. The Regional Housing Boards advise government ministers in sharing out a new single pot of housing resources to meet regional priorities – this includes money from new housing developments by Registered Social Landlords (RSL's). Some of the money is distributed on a sub-regional basis.

3.2.5   In response to the Communities Plan, London boroughs are grouped into five sub-regions. The seven London boroughs in South West London – Merton, Croydon, Kingston, Lambeth, Richmond, Sutton and Wandsworth – have formed a South-West London Housing Partnership as a vehicle for joint working. A sub-regional housing strategy was published in 2003 and the boroughs are now working towards a new sub-regional housing strategy (flowing from the emerging London Housing Strategy) to be published at the end of 2005.

3.2.6   The key strategy group for the sub-region is the Partnership Meeting. This comprises chief/senior housing officers with representatives from other organisations. The ALG and the Housing Corporation attend the strategic Partnership Meetings. The NHS housing co-ordinator for South-West London attends the development sub-group. Other stakeholders are invited to attend meetings when relevant. The detailed work is carried out by a number of sub-groups (including Supporting People), each taking forward strategic and/or operational issues to deliver the sub-region's Housing Strategy. The Partnership funds a dedicated post – the *Partnership Director* – to co-ordinate and manage activities. The structure is set out below:
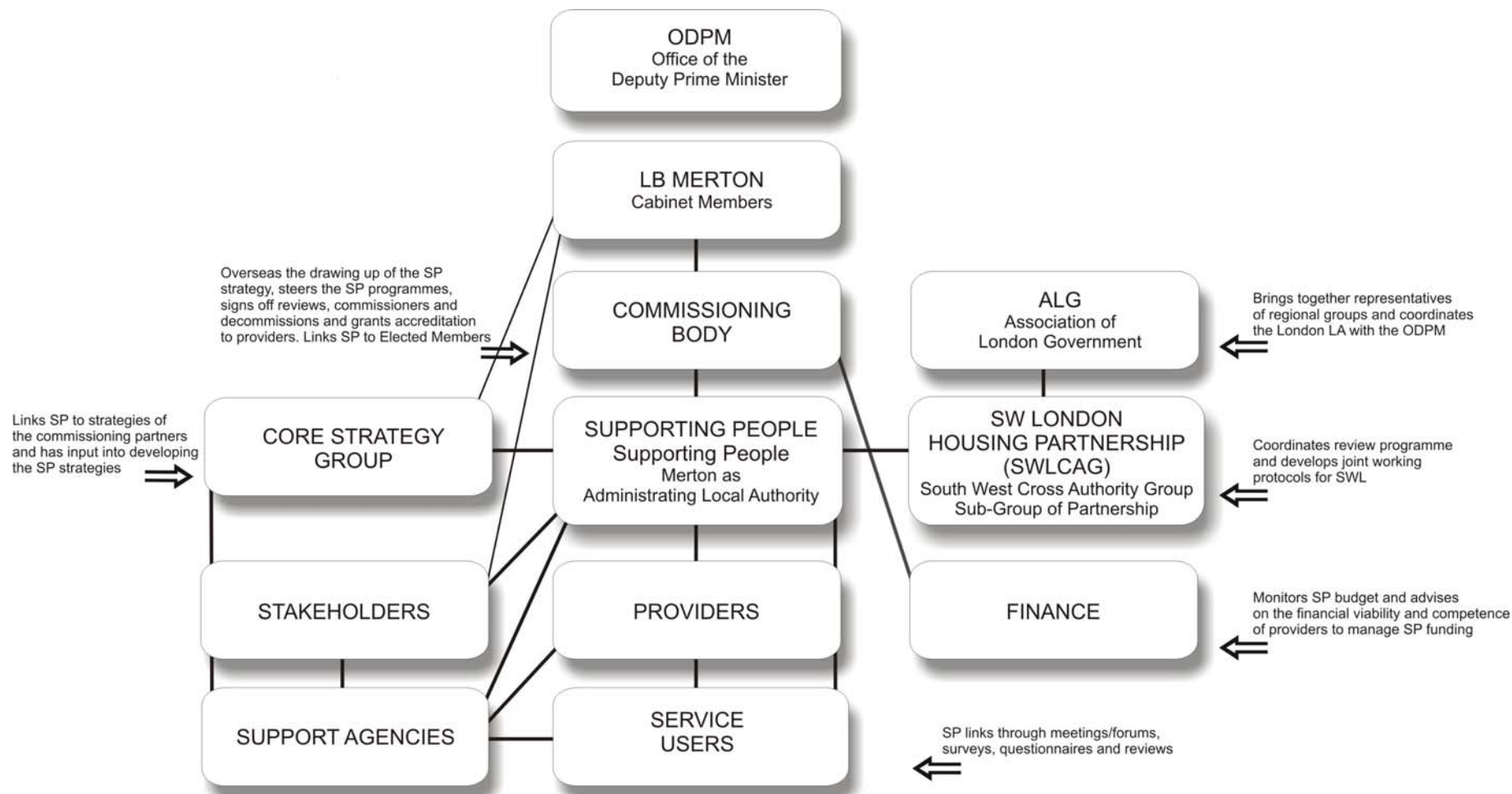
South-West London Housing Partnership Structure

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                              ┌──────────────────────────────┐
                              │ Members of individual boroughs │
                              └──────────────────────────────┘
                                                                        ┌─────────────────────┐
                                                                        │   ALG Housing       │
                                                                        │ Directors Steering  │
                                                                        │      Group          │
                                                                        └─────────────────────┘
   ┌──────────────┐          ┌──────────────────────────────────┐
   │ Partnership  │          │ South-West London Partnership Group: │
   │ Director:    │──────────│ Directors or Assistant Directors of  │
   │ Shelagh Hair │          │ Housing, RSL reps x 3, HC, ALG       │
   └──────────────┘          └──────────────────────────────────┘
   ┌────────────────────────┐
   │ Partnership Management │
   │ Group to manage work of│
   │ partnership (LA reps   │
   │ only at present & sub- │
   │ group chairs)          │
   └────────────────────────┘
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Sub-groups

Key workers	Affordable Housing Develop-ment	Strategy	Supporting People	Allocation & Choice-Based Lettings	Private Sector	BME Strategy	Homeless-ness

3.2.7   It is acknowledged that new development for supported housing has become very difficult, in the light of Supporting People revenue funding problems. There are just a few schemes being developed at present – one is the older people housing complex for ethnic elders in Merton from a cross-authority development involving Merton, Wandsworth and Croydon. Supporting People revenue costs will be top sliced from each authority to fund the scheme. Collectively, Supporting People managers in the sub-region are discussing how the latest cuts to the Supporting People Grant programme will affect both existing services and the ability to deliver new ones. Work to break the capital and revenue funding deadlock is urgently needed within the sub-region and this strategy acknowledges that new supported housing developments will have to come from joint capital bids and the pooling of Supporting People revenue resources from participating authorities.

3.3   Governance arrangements for Supporting People in Merton

3.3.1   The Supporting People Service in Merton is based within the Community and Housing Department and is managed by the Head of Community Care. The governance arrangements were revised early in 2004 and these changes have now been embedded into the overall service. The diagram set out below gives a structural overview of the main aspects of governance involved in Supporting People:

ODPM
Office of the
Deputy Prime Minister

LB MERTON
Cabinet Members

Overseas the drawing up of the SP strategy, steers the SP programmes, signs off reviews, commissioners and decommissions and grants accreditation to providers. Links SP to Elected Members

COMMISSIONING
BODY

ALG
Association of
London Government

Brings together representatives of regional groups and coordinates the London LA with the ODPM

Links SP to strategies of the commissioning partners and has input into developing the SP strategies

CORE STRATEGY
GROUP

SUPPORTING PEOPLE
Supporting People
Merton as
Administrating Local Authority

SW LONDON
HOUSING PARTNERSHIP
(SWLCAG)
South West Cross Authority Group
Sub-Group of Partnership

Coordinates review programme and develops joint working protocols for SWL

STAKEHOLDERS

PROVIDERS

FINANCE

Monitors SP budget and advises on the financial viability and competence of providers to manage SP funding

SUPPORT AGENCIES

SERVICE
USERS

SP links through meetings/forums, surveys, questionnaires and reviews

3.3.2   The Commissioning Body agreed revised terms of reference in 2004 and these detail the partnership of senior representatives with decision-making powers from:

- Merton as the administering Local Authority - Heads of Service leads from Community Care and Housing
- Probation Services
- Sutton and Merton Primary Care Trust

3.3.3   The Head of Community Care is the Chair of the Commissioning Body. Essentially the Commissioning Body agrees the strategic direction, oversees compliance with the ODPM's grant conditions, and monitors the delivery and development of the programme. This includes looking at:

- forward strategic planning
- the throughput and quality of the service review process
- service development through the commissioning and de-commissioning process
- administration of the programme by Merton as the administering authority, including performance management and the inspection process

3.3.4   The Core Strategy Group has a broader membership than the Commissioning Body and is potentially open to more key partners. This is a partnership for close working around the detail of issues in the Supporting People programme including progress of the programme and driving the improvement agenda. The Core Strategy Group played a leading role in the development of the five year strategy, proposing it to the Commissioning Body. The Chair of this group is the Housing Strategy and Development Manager in the strategic housing service of the department.

3.3.5   Essentially, the core strategy group makes recommendations to the commissioning body about:

- performance management
- finance/grant expenditure reports
- issues with partnership working
- details on the monitoring and engagement with service users
- details on the monitoring of services and proposals to address gaps in unmet needs

3.3.6   As the Local Administering Authority, Merton is responsible for the day-to-day administration and delivery of the Supporting People programme. The Supporting People Team is responsible for:

- the delivery, management and administration of the overall programme
- management of individual contracts

- monitoring and reporting of grant expenditure
- the development of local performance indicators with key partners
- the management, support and encouragement and partnership development of the provider base
- the communication and consultation strategy for the programme
- the pursuit of cross-authority and cross-agency procurement and service delivery
- completion of the service review process, reporting on outcomes and carrying out reality checks.

3.3.7 The governance arrangements reflect the role and contribution that providers, service users, stakeholders and support agencies make to the overall programme in Merton.

3.4 Merton context

3.4.1 The council has developed a business plan within a 'Journey to Excellence' framework headed by a clear vision to make Merton:

'a great place to live, work and learn'.

Underpinning this overall vision are six strategic objectives, which are:

Education Merton	The achievement of standards of excellence in our schools and colleges and inclusive access to learning, the arts and sport.
Safe, Clean and Green Merton	A safe and clean environment in our streets and open spaces to improve sustainability and provide a high quality of life for our residents.
Caring Merton	Support for vulnerable children that provides positive life chances and support for vulnerable adults that meets their needs while maximising their independence.
Thriving Merton	Regeneration of town centres and neighbourhoods to provide an attractive environment in which to live, visit and work. This includes improving the provision of housing and housing support.
Equalities Merton	Full and equal access to learning, employment, services and cultural life and the celebration of diversity.
Effective Merton	Strong corporate governance to deliver and sustain improvements and provide community leadership.

3.4.2   Over recent years, Merton has been rapidly developing partnerships both at strategic and operational levels. The Merton Local Strategic Partnership (now the Merton Partnership) was established in January 2002. In subsequent years the Partnership has developed significantly, adopting Merton's first Community Plan and overseeing its implementation (from July 2002) and commissioning and adopting a Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy for the borough (October 2004).

3.4.3   The core of the Merton Partnership comprises the Merton Partnership Grouping and an Executive Board. In addition there are seven Executive Partnerships for various topic areas. Taken together these arrangements represent what is termed 'The Wider Merton Partnership'. The Merton Partnership comprises senior representatives (both governance and executive roles) from key umbrella organisations active in Merton. It is responsible for facilitating the production of the Community Plan and Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy and for ensuring their implementation through the Executive Board. It is also responsible for decisions on cross cutting strategic issues affecting the economic, social and environmental well being of Merton's residents and businesses. In addition, it is responsible for communication between the Partnership and the wider community.

3.4.4   The seven Executive Partnerships are key strategic and/or statutory partnerships leading on specific topic areas primarily (but not exclusively) derived from the Community Plan. The Partnerships are accountable to the Executive Board, represent their wider sectors and 'filter' the work of all other partnerships and agencies prior to consideration by the Executive Board. They also have responsibility for taking instructions from the Executive Board in delivering aspects of the Community Plan and Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy, embedding key targets and pursuing bespoke pieces of work on behalf of the Merton Partnership. These Executive Partnerships form part of what is known as the Wider Merton Partnership as set out in the diagram overleaf.
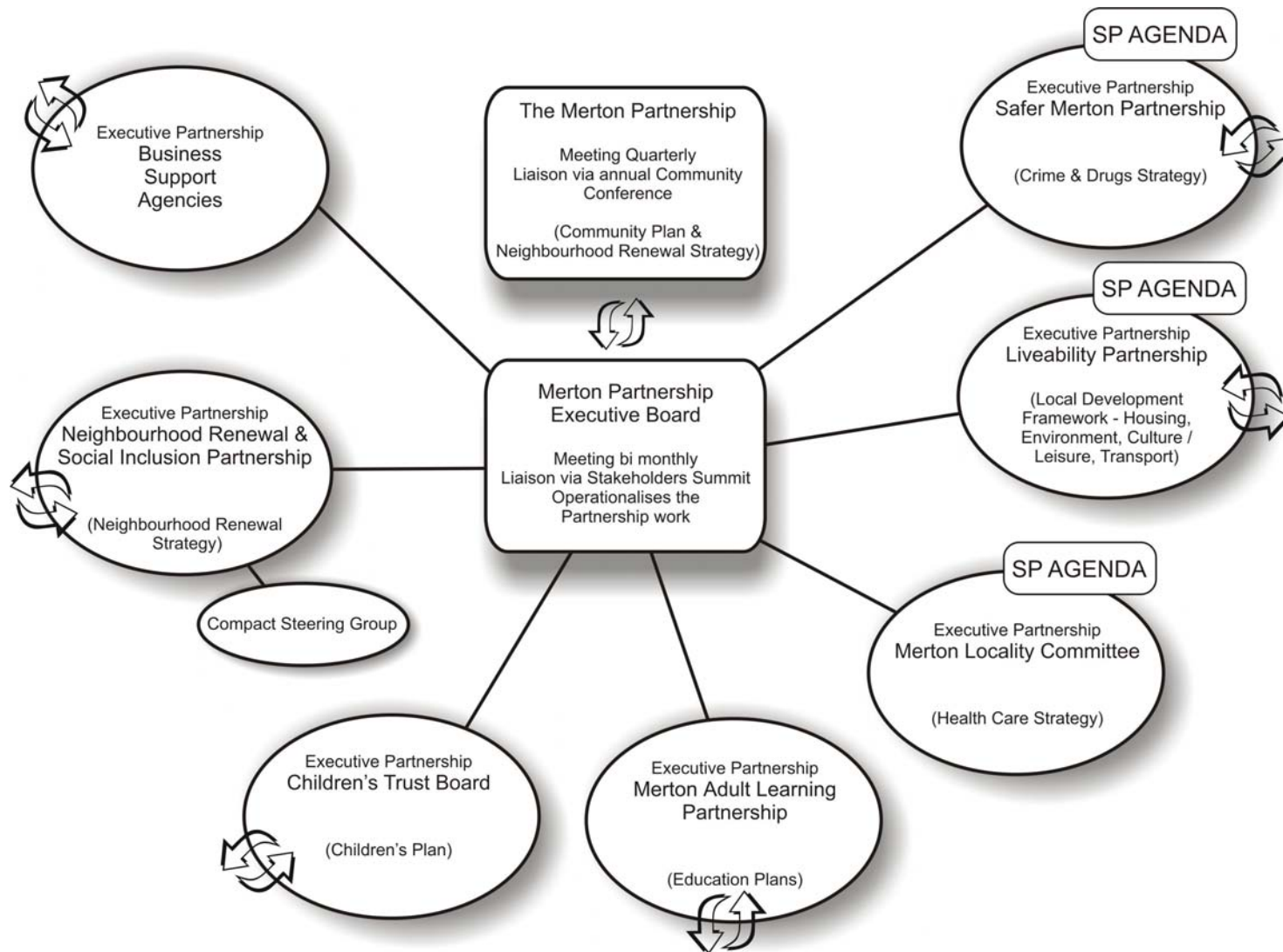
3.4.5   The development of this five-year strategy has brought together needs analysis from all key stakeholders and has identified gaps in provision. Supporting People, via its Commissioning Body and Core Strategy Group is working to establish a clear framework for 'who does what' in order that a range of needs can be met. This is now putting Supporting People more centre stage in relation to other housing and care strategies.

3.4.6   The key strategies which are driving the care and support of vulnerable people are:

- **Promoting Independence**, with a focus on:

  - person centred services
  - living independently with own tenancy as far as practicable, using assistive technologies to promote safety and security
  - gaining employment, training, education for younger people
  - keeping healthy and active in older age

  There are a whole raft of priorities, strategies and initiatives concerned with health and social care that Supporting People can complement. Some of these focus on the wider population, whilst others focus on specific client groups. These national priorities are reflected in local agendas, such as the Sutton and Merton Primary Care Trust's Local Delivery Plan. Relevant national targets include increasing the range and choice of housing open to people with learning disabilities to enable them to live as independently as possible, increasing the participation of problem drug users, improving health outcomes for people with long-term conditions by offering a personalised care plan for vulnerable people most at risk and to reduce emergency day beds, through improved care in primary care and community settings.

- **'Better Healthcare Closer to Home'** is a programme led by Sutton and Merton PCT, which focuses on the use of primary and intermediate care, particularly for older people, to avoid unnecessary hospital admissions. Health and social care services in Merton are increasingly integrated at the frontline, across all care groups, which is enabling easier access and single assessment.

- **Children and Young Persons' Plan**. The overarching plan is being developed in line with the Children Act 2004, which puts together all of the strategic planning for children and young people in the borough.

- **Crime and Drugs Strategies** with an emphasis on reducing the number of young people abusing substances and involved in crime, and reducing the number of adults who are prolific offenders or originators of anti-social behaviour. Merton has a Local Public Service Agreement target in relation to enabling more people into drug treatment.
  One of the Government's objectives is to reduce re-offending and key targets have been set, notably reducing re-offending by 5% for young offenders and for adults either sentenced to imprisonment or to community sentences. Supporting People services can contribute to this broad objective, either by working alongside other services to prevent those at risk of offending from doing so, or by providing appropriate and accessible accommodation that can assist the successful rehabilitation of offenders. Research has shown that tackling severe accommodation problems can reduce re-offending rates by up to 20%.

The Probation Service is a key partner with Supporting People, both nationally and locally. The Home Office publication 'Reducing re-offending; a national action plan' published in July 2004 identifies accommodation issues as an area where action needs to be taken.

- **Housing strategies** to tackle homelessness / develop mainstream housing and enable people from black and minority ethnic groups to access appropriate housing.
  The government has set a number of national and/or local targets around homeless prevention, including avoiding the use of bed and breakfast accommodation for homeless families with children and households with pregnant women, reducing the level of homelessness acceptances against the three main causes of homelessness, reducing the level of repeat homelessness. The Supporting People programme can contribute towards meeting these aims in several ways. It can fund tenancy sustainment services, thereby preventing both first-time or repeat homelessness, or resettlement services, to help people make the transition from homelessness to a more settled, stable existence.

- The **Supporting People Strategy** is positioned to work alongside other agency strategies, particularly, health, housing, social care, probation and community safety.

An analysis of housing and support needs has been undertaken across the care sector and this will guide priorities for the Supporting People Five-Year Strategy, as well as priorities for other housing and social care strategies.

3.5   Demographic information

3.5.1   The London Borough of Merton is situated in the South-West of London bordered by Kingston upon Thames, Sutton, Wandsworth, Lambeth and Croydon. The borough shares the same Primary Care Trust (PCT) boundary with Sutton. Merton covers an area of 38 square kilometres and is comprised of five main centres – Wimbledon, Mitcham, Morden, Colliers Wood and Raynes Park. The proposed strategy for 'Better Healthcare Closer to Home' outlines four neighbourhoods – the PCT has aligned these with Merton's area forums (Mitcham, Morden, Wimbledon and Raynes Park). The integrated social services and health services for older people will be based on these neighbourhoods.

3.5.2   Merton is a mixture of suburban housing, retail, manufacturing and warehousing areas and natural open spaces. It has a population of around 190,000 and describes itself as an inner-outer London borough. The population is forecast to rise to 209,000 by 2016, with a disproportionate rise in children and young people and a reduction in older people. It is a borough of sharp economic contrasts – whilst Village and Hillside wards in Wimbledon are in the top 5% most affluent wards nationally, Lavender, Pollards Hill and Phipps Bridge are amongst the top 15% most income deprived wards in England. There are areas of general deprivation clustered in the east of the borough that are characterised by inner London issues. Certain wards contain high concentrations of groups with specific needs, e.g. elderly people (St Helier), lone parents (Phipps Bridge), young people (Pollards Hill) and ethnic minorities (Graveney).

3.5.3 There are around 79,000 households in the borough. Some 85% of the borough's households live in the private sector, while 9% are council tenants and 6% are housing association or registered social landlord tenants. The council's rented housing stock consists of just under 7,000 dwellings. Council tenants voted in July 2002 on whether or not to transfer their homes to a newly established housing association. The outcome, by a narrow margin, was for the housing stock to remain with the council.

Nearly a quarter of the total population of the borough (23%) is under 18 and over 25% are aged 55 years or over. There has been a 6% increase in the ethnic minority population since 1991 and currently 25% of the population are from ethnic minorities (the largest groups are 4.3% Indian, 3.7% Black Caribbean, 3.5% other Asian and 3.4% Black African).

Merton Population by Ethnic Groups (2001)
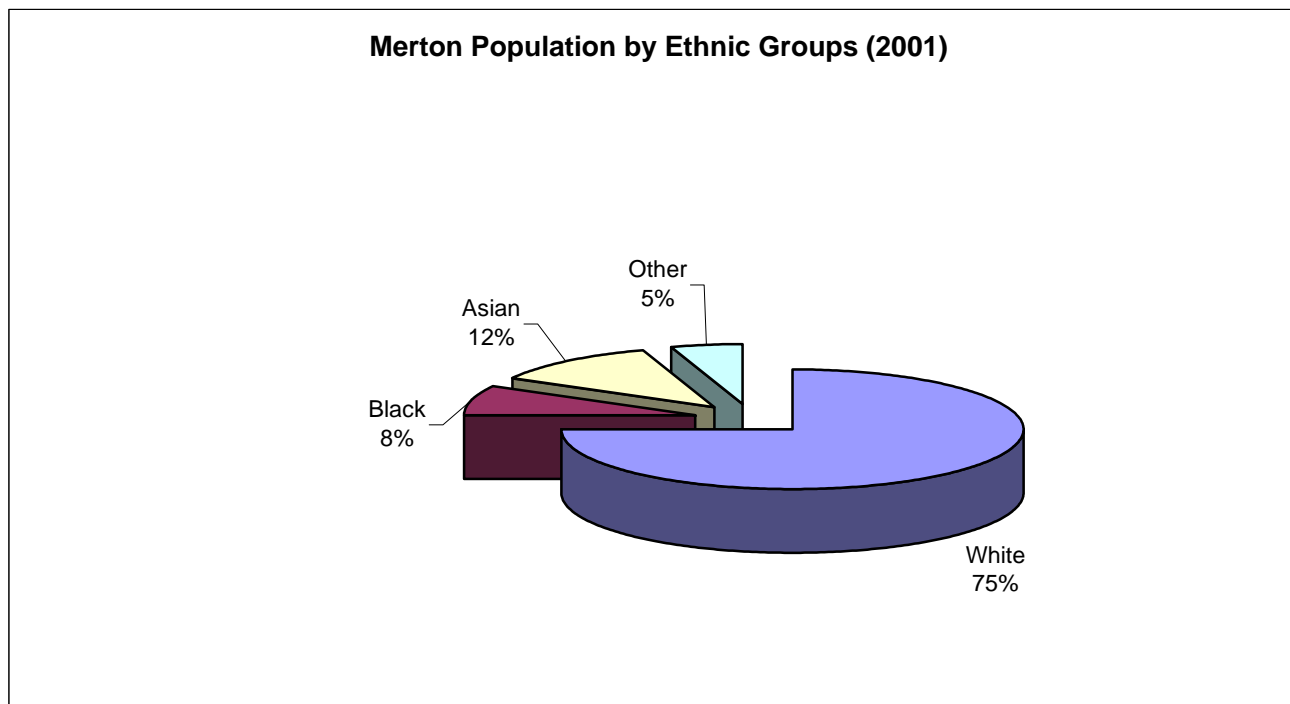
3.6   Strategy development

3.6.1   The development of the strategy has been managed by the Core Strategy Group (CSG) and overseen by the Commissioning Body (CB). Membership of these groups can be found at Appendix 1.

These groups comprise of representatives from the London Borough of Merton, Sutton and Merton Primary Care Trust and the Probation Service. These people are also responsible for representing the interests of Supporting People at other established planning groups.

3.6.2   Work on developing the strategy included:

- Analysis of the support services that are currently funded and a comparison of this information with national and regional figures
- Analysis of Merton's population based on the census and other data
- Analysis of the strategic priorities set out in other plans, which Supporting People services complement
- Interviews with providers and commissioners
- Consultation with providers, service users and carers
- A review of ODPM's comments about the shadow strategy
- Identification of unmet needs
- Identification of specific issues for BME communities
- Identification of the need for floating support and specialist supported housing

3.6.3   Consultation with service users was carried out during April and May 2004. 100 people were interviewed as part of the consultation, which was designed to examine:

- Levels of awareness of the services provided
- Whether services were perceived to meet client needs
- Service users' perspectives of the assessment process
- Issues around consultation and communication
- Potential improvements to services

3.6.4   The survey found virtually no criticisms about either the attitude or the helpfulness of staff and 88% of participants who knew they had a key worker rated their performance as either good or very good. In terms of the support they received, 76% said that they got the help they needed, 74% thought that the service provider took account of their views, 79% felt that providers thought that clients views were important and 83% thought that they were kept informed about the decisions that affected them.

One of the main conclusions from the survey was that, with the exception of some clients especially in the under 30 age group, the vast majority of clients rate the service they receive as either good or very good.

3.6.5   The main issue for the council was the extremely low profile of the Supporting People process. Thus only half (51%) of participants knew that they had a key or support Worker and only a third (34%) remembered having any discussion about their needs prior to being placed with their current project. Whilst recall of these factors was notably low amongst those aged over 60, there were significant numbers across all the age bands who failed to connect with the Supporting People process. People appeared to be satisfied with the outcome if uncertain as to the process that achieved it.

3.6.6   As far as the service users who were interviewed were concerned, the Supporting People programme appears to be working well in delivering help and support to vulnerable groups. However, possibly due to the way in which the programme is delivered or to problems experienced by the clients themselves, many users fail to recognise some of the programme's basic building blocks, such as the existence of their key worker or of the needs assessment process prior to their placement.

3.6.7   The Supporting People service hosted a provider and stakeholder forum in January 2005 at which the draft strategy was discussed. Feedback on the strategy was collated and the key points have been included, either in terms of priorities for investment or as part of the wider action plan. For example, one of the key priorities stated was the need for more floating support, across all client groups. This is reflected in the priorities as set out in section 6.3.1.

3.6.8   The more detailed needs analysis carried out in discussion with key stakeholders is contained in a separate document ('Supply and Needs Analysis – An Analysis of Inherited Service Provision against Current and Projected Future Need'). This provides an analysis across the different client groups and brings together information on supply, costs and need. The document sets out an aspirational list for expanding and developing services and this could, to some extent, be considered a 'wish-list' given the resources and capacity to realistically deliver over the strategy's lifetime. As set out in Section 6 (Priorities for Action), the aspirational list was used, alongside other information, to produce the key priorities for Merton for the next five years.

3.6.9   The draft strategy was presented to Merton's Joint Consultative Committee (JCC) with Ethnic Minority Organisations. The JCC recognised the importance of the potential decommissioning and recommissioning processes, and the impact of the whole sub-regional agenda. Progress against the strategy will be reported to the JCC on a regular basis.

3.6.10 The draft strategy was also presented to the Health and Community Care Scrutiny Panel. Regular progress reports will be taken to the Panel.

3.6.11 The strategy was signed off on behalf of the local administering authority by the Cabinet members for Housing and for Community Care.

PART 2

4.   Vision and Objectives

4.1   The vision of the Supporting People programme is: 'To enable vulnerable people to maximise their independence, building safe and fulfilling lives in the community through support to their housing circumstances that meets their needs.'

4.2   The key objectives that will support achievement of the overall vision are:

a) Improve the needs analysis with a special emphasis on people excluded from services and services to the BME community

b) Improve our partnership working with service providers, stakeholders, support agencies and service users

c) Work with other boroughs to develop accessible services for people across borough boundaries

d) Increase resources towards generic floating support services and get the balance right between accommodation-based services and floating support

e) Improve communications with an emphasis towards service-users and access to services

f) Set high standards for quality and value for money in the service review programme and performance monitoring

g) Use the budget creatively, linking with other funding streams for multi-dimensional needs and ensure the overall programme is cohesively linked into other corporate plans and wider partnerships.

4.3   The vision statement encapsulates the fact that people are at the heart of the Supporting People programme and that a key criteria of success is the way in which individuals lives are improved. The following examples demonstrate the impact that Supporting People has on people's lives:

Mr A is a young man with a diagnosis of paranoid schizophrenia. After spending many months in a psychiatric hospital, Mr A was found a place in one of our SP funded units. Mr A presented as an isolated, distressed young man with complex difficulties. He was neglecting himself physically and had no control over his own finances as his mother dealt with every aspect of his benefits and budgeting. Through regular key work sessions, practical support and through linking Mr A with other appropriate services, much has been achieved in a short time. The key improvements in his quality of life include:

- Greater financial independence – he now controls his own finances and is learning to budget effectively
- Increased social skills and confidence – Mr A has built a network of friends who he now goes out with socially and he also attends a music group and writing group in the community, and plans to go back to college in the future
- Through support and encouragement his self care has greatly improved; he now does shopping and cooking sessions with staff support.

In February 2005, Mr A applied for a move-on flat with a housing association. While on this occasion the flat was not allocated to him, he received positive feedback about his ability to live independently.

G. is 18 years old and, in common with other young people, enjoys the freedom to make decisions regarding issues affecting her life. She is employed as a crèche worker and lifeguard and thoroughly enjoys her work. She has ambitions to become a personal trainer and is determined to achieve her career goal.
G. was referred to a supported housing scheme in July 2004. When asked to comment on the support received, G. made the following comments:

"I like living where I do because I have a lot more freedom to make my own decisions. I can also have friends over to visit when I want to. When I was living in supported lodgings I had to give a week's notice before I could have a friend visit me…..this was really embarrassing! I also have more support and have learned to cook proper meals and am learning to manage my money better. I have also learned how to deal with letters and forms – especially housing benefit forms! I like the fact that my Supported Housing Officer seems to have more time for me and I can pop into the office for a chat even if we haven't arranged a key worker meeting that day."

G. has been living in the scheme since August 2004 and is looking forward to moving on to permanent accommodation in the near future.

Mr W. is 39 years old. He is in full-time employment and enjoys a steady income. In addition to this, he enjoys spending time with friends and supports his local football team. He loves his home, which he has recently decorated himself and furnished to suit his tastes. In general, Mr W. leads a satisfying and normal life – this is why his story is a success.
When Mr W. was first referred to a supported housing scheme in April 2004, he came with a history of petty crime dating back to 1985. Alcohol and soft drug usage seemed to be a catalyst for his offending behaviour – criminal damage, driving offences and theft.
Mr W. reflects on how unmotivated and depressed he felt when he first came onto the scheme shortly after leaving prison:

"I remember feeling very low and sad all the time. I had nothing to challenge me and nothing to live for. I was paranoid all the time and felt like society and everyone was against me. Now I'm sorted. If it hadn't been for the supported housing I know I would have gone back to prison, back to my old ways."
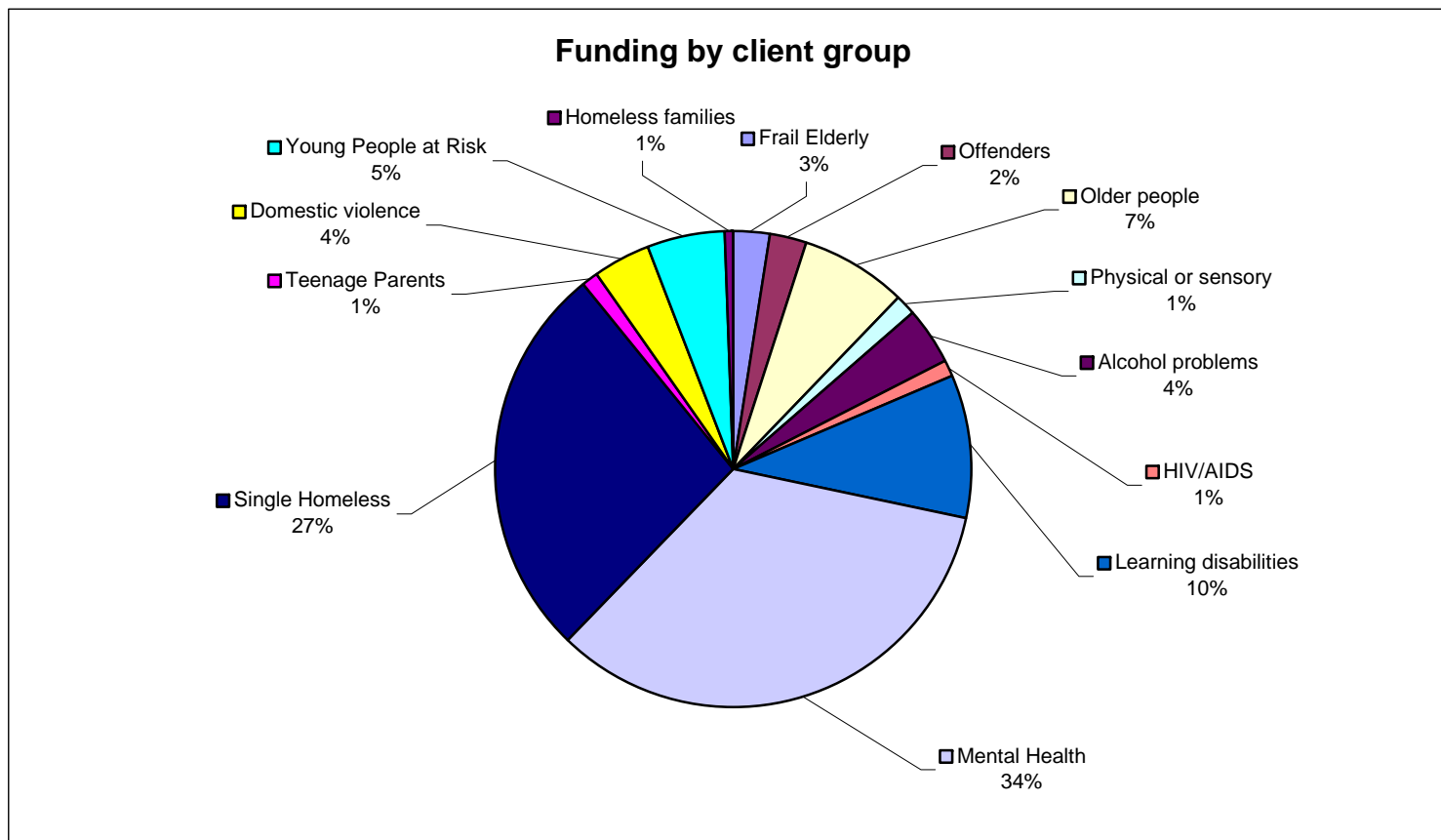
When asked to compare his life prior to the scheme, Mr W. is proud of changes he has made and the support given:

"I feel so much more confident now and feel good about myself. I am slowly getting into control of my finances, it's great. I just want a normal life, to earn some money and have some nice things, just like everybody else."
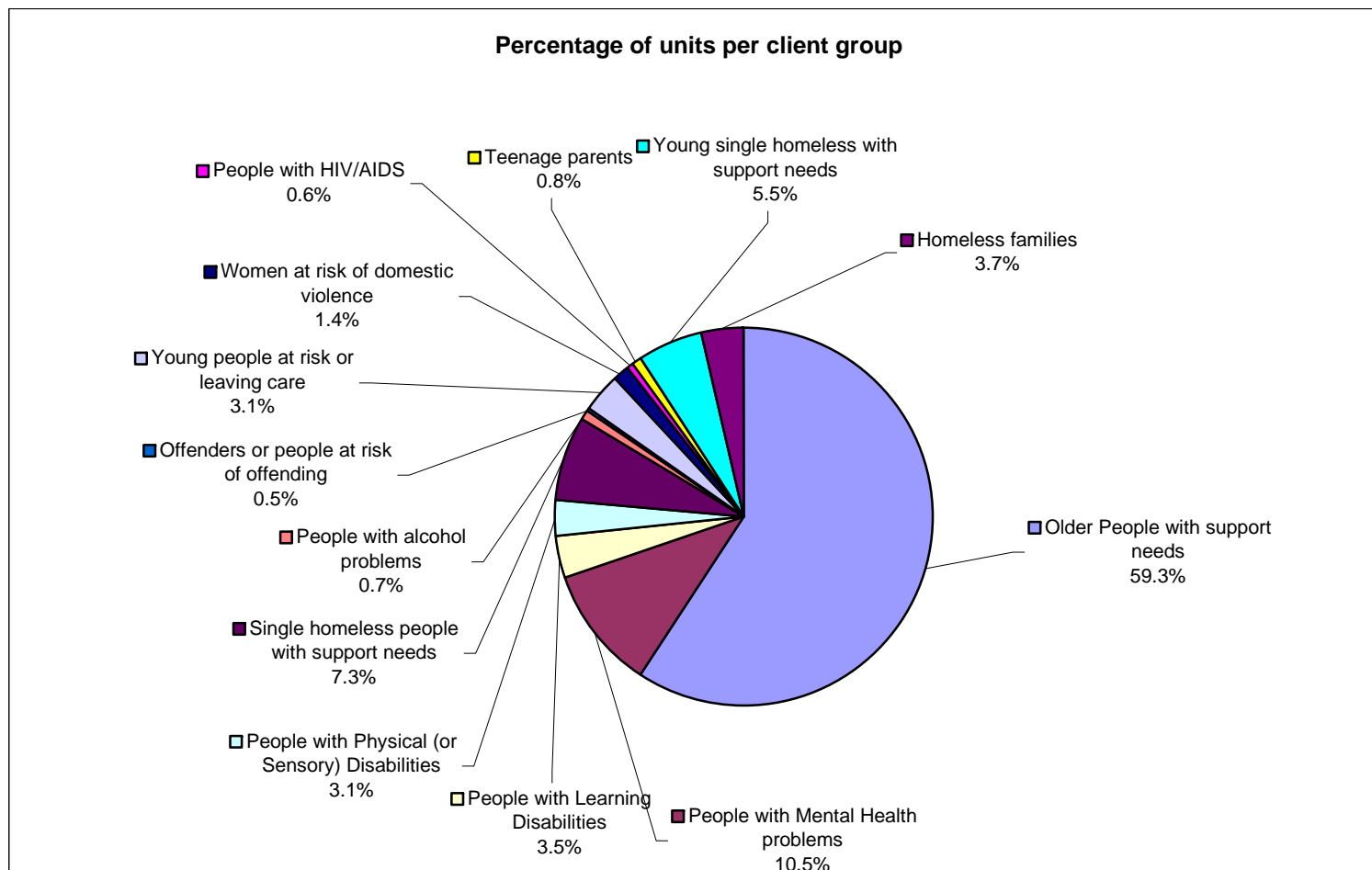
5.   Needs and Supply Analysis

5.1   Current picture of inherited service provision

The table below shows the breakdown by budget and client group of SP funded services:

Funding by client group

The table below shows the percentage breakdown by units and client groups:

Percentage of units per client group

Client group	Percentage
Older People with support needs	59.3%
People with Mental Health problems	10.5%
Single homeless people with support needs	7.3%
Young single homeless with support needs	5.5%
Homeless families	3.7%
People with Learning Disabilities	3.5%
Young people at risk or leaving care	3.1%
People with Physical (or Sensory) Disabilities	3.1%
Women at risk of domestic violence	1.4%
Teenage parents	0.8%
People with alcohol problems	0.7%
People with HIV/AIDS	0.6%
Offenders or people at risk of offending	0.5%

5.2   Service review progress to date

All Supporting People services have to be reviewed by March 2006 in accordance with government guidance and should be measured against the Supporting People Quality Assessment framework.
We have made a good start to the review programme and are on schedule to complete all reviews within the first three years. By the end of 2004-05, 54 reviews will have been undertaken which will constitute 83% of services. The remaining 11 reviews are scheduled to take place in 2005-06.

At the outset, we agreed the following principles:

- The more expensive services would be reviewed early in the programme
- Services providing related primary client groups would be reviewed at a similar time
- We would review all the services of one provider together if possible

Within these overall principles, the review programme was then essentially based on client groups:

Year	Services
2003-04	Single Homeless, Ex-Offenders, Young People including care leavers and teenage parents, Domestic Violence and the Care & Repair Service
2004-05	Mental Health, Learning Disability and Drug & Alcohol Services
2005-06	Older People, Physical Disability, and HIV/Aids

Where there have been concerns about particular services or providers, reviews of these services have been brought forward as necessary.

The review process followed involves initially asking providers to complete Quality Assessment Framework forms and a strategic relevance questionnaire. Once these are returned, a desktop review is carried out in order to assess responses and generate queries or issues for discussion at the validation visit by the Supporting People Review Officer that follows. In addition, questionnaires are sent to service users and stakeholders and the analysis of these used to inform the outcome of the reviews.

The majority of reviews carried out to date (71%) assessed standards against core objectives at performance level 'C'. An element of the detailed action plan is to work with providers to improve performance.

To date, there have been three reviews undertaken that have presented significant issues that have required follow-up action.

5.3   Analysis of current provision

A summary analysis of current provision by client group is shown below:

Older People with support needs
There are currently a total of 873 units funded by SP for this client group, including 74 very sheltered housing and 90 floating support units (though Care & Repair). Sheltered/supported housing is under provided according to ODPM comparisons. Costs per week per 1,000 head of population are £29.15 for accommodation based support. The total figure of £29.15 places it below the regional average of £170.32 and the national average of £203.19.

People with mental health problems
There are currently a total of 154 units funded by SP for this client group, including 39 adult placements and 12 tenancy support. There is a lower than regional average provision of supported accommodation supplied at a lower than average regional cost. The unmet need resulting from this manifests itself in a high incident of places being made outside of the borough. The under-supply of services is particularly acute at the high/complex needs end of the spectrum. Costs per week per 1,000 head of population are £126.02 for accommodation based support and £3.30 for floating support. The total figure of £129.32 is below the regional figure of £196.24, but higher than the national figure of £109.89. However, this client group does have the largest percentage (34%) of the Supporting People grant in Merton.

People with learning disabilities (PLD)
There are currently a total of 52 units funded by SP for this client group. This includes 8 units on the Adult Placement Scheme. A number of the units are in registered care homes and funding is consequently 'legacy SHMG'. Funding for these will be phased out as part of review and monitoring process, as registered care homes cannot be considered strategically relevant. ODPM information suggests that Merton has only 50% of services funded by SP as would be expected from population figures. Cost per week per 1,000 head of population is £36.49 for accommodation based support. The figure of £36.49 is below the regional figure of £116.32 and lowers even further when compared to the national figure of £178.54. Units available per 1,000 head of population are 0.27 for accommodation-based support. The figure of 0.27 is below the regional figure of 0.60 and the national figure of 0.69 at national level. These figures will decrease further once the 26 registered care homes cease to be funded as from 1ˢᵗ April 2005.

People with a physical or sensory disability
There are currently a total of 45 units funded by SP for this client group.
Costs per week per 1,000 head of population are £5.35 for accommodation-based support. The total figure of £5.35 places it below the regional average of £11.69 and the national figure of £16.39.
Units available per 1,000 head of population are 0.23 for accommodation-based support. This is in line with both the regional and national average of 0.23.

Single homeless people with support needs
There are currently a total of 189 units funded by SP for this client group. This includes 81 units for young single homeless and 11 units of floating support. Costs per week per 1,000 head of population are £97.89 for accommodation based support and £3.83 for floating support. The total figure of £101.72 is below the regional figure of £212.18 and just below the national figure of £112.13.
Units available per 1,000 head of population are 0.88 for accommodation-based support and 0.10 for floating support. This total of 0.98 is below the regional figure of 1.80, but slightly above the national figure of 0.95.

People with alcohol problems
There are a total of 11 units funded by SP for this client group. There is no high need supported accommodation for drugs and alcohol. Costs per week per 1,000 head of population are £11.31 for accommodation based support and £2.66 for floating support. The total figure of £13.97 places it below the regional average of £19.66, but above the national figure of £7.57.
Units available per 1,000 head of population are 0.04 for accommodation-based support and 0.02 for floating support. The total of 0.06 is below the regional figure of 0.16, but only slightly below the national level of 0.07.

People with drug problems
There are currently no dedicated supported housing services in Merton for residents with drug misuse problems. There is however a floating support worker who is working with clients leaving treatment programmes. This post sustains a caseload of 15. There is no provision in Merton (for Merton residents) of supported housing for post detox.

Offenders or people at risk of offending
There are currently a total of 7 units funded by SP for this client group.

Young people at risk or leaving care
There are currently 46 units funded by SP for this client group. 10 units are specifically for young people leaving care and 36 are for young people at risk.

Women at risk of domestic violence
There are currently a total of 20 units funded by SP for this client group, 3 of which are specifically for Asian women.

People with HIV/Aids
There are currently a total of 9 units funded by SP for this client group.

Homeless families in need of support, including Teenage Parents
There are currently a total of 55 units funded by SP for this client group.

There are currently a total of 12 units funded by SP for Teenage Parents, 6 units of live-in accommodation with on-site support and 6 units of floating support. Both of these services are provided through Wandle Housing Association.

Refugees
There are no units funded by SP for this client group.

5.4   Supply gaps

The table below compares provision in Merton against ODPM upper and lower bands:

Client Group	Accommodation-based			Floating support			Total	
	Upper band	Lower band	Actual units	Upper band	Lower band	Actual units	No	%
Older People with support needs	3414	1001	783	124	7	90	873	59%
People with Mental Health Problems	388	120	144	172	29	10	154	10%
People with Learning Disabilities	149	70	52*	10	2	0	52	4%
People with Physical (or Sensory) Disabilities	253	35	44	20	1	1	45	3%
Single Homeless People with support needs	698	7	97	98	5	11	108	7%
People with Alcohol Problems	39	24	8	24	6	3	11	1%
People with Drug Problems	15	6	0	4	1	0	0	0%
Offenders or people at risk of offending	45	22	7	2	0	0	7	0%
Young people at risk or leaving care	128	81	41	23	4	5	46	3%
Women at risk of domestic violence	121	24	20	2	0	0	20	1%
People with HIV/AIDS	359	40	9	10	4	0	9	1%

Teenage parents	26	21	6	11	0	6	12	1%
Refugees	29	2	0	0	0	0	0	0%
Young single homeless with support needs			81			0	81	5%
Homeless families			55			0	55	4%
Total	**5664**	**1453**	**1347**	**500**	**59**	**126**	**1473**	**100%**

* includes 25 bedspaces in registered care homes receiving SHMG

Older People with support needs
Comparison to the ODPM supply profile tables would suggest that there is an under supply of sheltered housing for older people. It also shows that the provision for very sheltered housing for older people is at the lower end of the need that is estimated for a borough like Merton.

People with mental health problems
When compared to the ODPM supply profile, it would appear that the borough has an under-supply of services for this client group.

People with learning disabilities
ODPM information suggests that Merton is below the lower band for services as would be expected from population figures.

People with a physical or sensory disability
The supply of floating support services and supported accommodation for this client group is at the lower end of the ODPM supply profile.

Single homeless people with support needs
The supply of services for this client group is above the lower band but below the upper band.

People with alcohol problems
The supply of floating support services to this client group is at the lower end of the ODPM supply profile for floating support and the supply of supported accommodation is below the lower end figure.

<u>People with drug problems</u>
There are currently no dedicated supported housing services in Merton for residents with drug misuse problems. There is no provision in Merton (for Merton residents) of supported housing for post detox. The supply of supported accommodation is below the lower end figure.

<u>Offenders or people at risk of offending</u>
The supply of supported accommodation is below the lower end figure.
The previous provision of 10 dispersed units has recently been reduced to 7, and there is a lower level of support than was previously provided.

The Housing Needs Service has been able to secure the provision of 25 beds for single people and it is envisaged that further negotiations will secure an additional 6 beds specifically for ex-offenders.

<u>Women at risk of domestic violence</u>
The number of bedspaces is below the lower end of the ODPM supply profile.

<u>People with HIV/Aids</u>
The number of units is below the lower end of the ODPM supply profile.

<u>Homeless families in need of support, including Teenage Parents</u>
The number of units for Teenage Parents is below the lower end of the ODPM supply profile.

<u>Refugees</u>
There is currently no provision for refugees in Merton; this gap has been highlighted through work undertaken for the Ethnic Minority Housing Strategy.

6. Priorities for action

6.1 London-wide statement

London boroughs are working together to meet the specific needs of vulnerable people. It is widely recognised that while some people may want to move from their local area, certain client groups need access to services away from the area in which they live or have no local connection. This includes services where need is not sufficient to require provision in every London authority. To meet these needs, London boroughs will need to work together in the procurement and commissioning of services and also on service reviews to streamline the programme.

Merton is a member of the Association of London Government (ALG) and will work with the ALG and other London boroughs to meet the priorities in the 5-year London Supporting People Strategy for cross authority services. The London boroughs have agreed the strategy through the ALG's Leaders' Committee, made up of the leaders of the 33 London councils.

The ALG convenes the London Supporting People Strategic Forum to provide leadership, planning and management for London's cross authority services. The forum will ensure vulnerable people can access a range of quality services in London and is chaired by a London Director of Housing and a London Director of Social Services.

Merton will:

- Continue to work with other London boroughs, the ALG and the London Supporting People Strategic Forum to address pan-London issues
- Recognise that all boroughs have a responsibility for hosting, supporting and developing services that do not only respond to local need
- Work within the South-West sub-region but also across regional boundaries to address specific needs, especially in central London
- Identify, plan and where possible jointly commission cross borough services, sharing expertise, experience and resources with regards to housing support services for vulnerable people who are transient
- Consult other London boroughs as part of the service review process for cross authority services
- Ensure that the needs of vulnerable people in London, for which it is difficult to define a local connection, are met
- Avoid duplication in terms of monitoring reviews and consultation requirements on behalf of providers and share best practice
- Ensure that services that could or should be focusing on local needs are supported to do so.

6.2   Cross-authority statement

6.2.1   Merton is a member of the South-West London Cross-Authority Group of Supporting People. The main aim of the group is to:

'work collaboratively across the South-West London region to manage and deliver the Supporting People Programme'.

6.2.2   The five key priorities agreed by the Group for the next five years are:

Priority 1: To make efficiencies in the administration and delivery of the Supporting People programme across the sub-region.
Priority 2: To ensure the needs of cross-authority client groups are included in regional, sub-regional and local service planning.
Priority 3: To ensure the cross authority needs of BME communities are taken account of in regional, sub-regional and local planning.
Priority 4: To maximise opportunities for capital and revenue investment in Supporting People services across South-West London.
Priority 5: To develop the skills and capacity of staff in Supporting People Teams and provider organisations to meet cross-authority needs.

6.2.3   The collective population of the seven South-West London boroughs is more than one and a half million, just over a fifth (21.5%) of London's total population. Between 1991 and 2001, the overall population increased by nearly 5%. This growth is projected to increase further over the next 15 years and it is estimated that the population will increase by around 9%. There has been a disproportionate growth in the number of people from black and ethnic minority communities, with the proportion in South-West London increasing from 15% in 1991 to 24% in 2001.

6.2.4   The sub-region is for many people an attractive place to live, with a strong local economy and infrastructure. South-West London has a high level of economic activity, diverse employment opportunities and above average levels of skills and attainment. However, the sub-region also has areas of social and economic deprivation (4 wards fall within the worst 10% nationally and a further 42 within the worst 30%). South-West London has a serious shortage of housing and the growing population is putting pressure on the existing housing stock. High house prices and rents prohibit access to private sector housing for many. The proportion of social housing at rents that people can afford is relatively small.

6.2.5   There is a range of client groups that will be primarily local as they are neither transient nor need to leave the area due to their circumstances, for example, older people, people with learning disabilities and most teenage parents and homeless families. Services for young vulnerable people and people with mental health problems are generally local although there is some demand for cross authority services. The link between homelessness and mental health is well established and it is likely that with both these client groups, services could be both local and cross authority based as there will be a demand for both options.

6.2.6   The South-West London group has agreed a number of client groups for whom cross authority service provision will be required. These are Single Homeless, Domestic Violence, Drug and Alcohol Misuse and ex-offenders. Additionally the group will consider the regional supply and need of BME communities and the provision of specialist services where these cannot be met at local level.
The London Supporting People Strategy has identified that in South-West London, need exceeds supply for all four cross authority groups. Meeting the identified need for services for these groups is a key challenge for the sub-region over the coming five years.

6.2.7   The South-West London group meets on a monthly basis, sharing issues and good practice and working through an agreed annual plan. There is a monthly sub-group of monitoring and review officers with their own annual plan. The key areas of work that are being addressed by the South-West London group include:

- Development of a joint commissioning procedure
- Training, development and capacity building
- Cross authority movement and access to services
- Benchmarking of performance information and costs
- Needs mapping and agreeing sub-regional priorities

The group has held one cross authority Inclusive Forum which received very positive feedback and has been helpful in the development of strategic priorities.

6.2.8   The group has two representatives on the London Supporting People Strategic Forum, which is coordinated by the Association of London Government (ALG). This forum has developed the pan-London Supporting People Strategy. Formally, the group is a sub-group of the South West London Housing Partnership, which is coordinating the overall housing strategy for South-West London. Through the partnership, links have been made with the sub-groups working on BME housing needs.

6.3   Priorities for Merton

6.3.1   The analysis of supply against need indicates that for many client groups the supply is below what would be expected for a borough like Merton. However, the funding position in Merton, at least for the next two financial years, means that it will not be possible to address all expressed need. Following discussion and consultation with stakeholders, the Commissioning Body has identified the following client groups as being the highest priority:

Drugs and Alcohol
There are currently no dedicated supported housing services in Merton for residents with drug misuse problems. There is no provision in Merton (for Merton residents) of supported housing for post detox. The supply of supported accommodation is below the expected supply. The supply of floating support services to this client group is at the lower end of the ODPM supply profile.
The South-West London Cross Authority Group has agreed that this is a client group for whom cross authority service provision will be required. The London Supporting People Strategy has identified that in South-West London, need exceeds supply for this cross authority group.

Offenders
The supply of supported accommodation is below the expected supply.
The South-West London Cross Authority Group has agreed that this is a client group for whom cross authority service provision will be required. The London Supporting People Strategy has identified that in South-West London, need exceeds supply for this cross authority group.

Domestic Violence
The number of bed spaces is below the lower end of the ODPM supply profile.
The South-West London Cross Authority Group has agreed that this is a client group for whom cross authority service provision will be required. The London Supporting People Strategy has identified that in South-West London, need exceeds supply for this cross authority group.

<u>Young people leaving care/Young people at risk</u>
There is a need for floating support provision in this area given that it is not policy to put groups of children leaving care together and therefore they would not be placed in clusters of supported accommodation.

<u>Extra Care Housing for Older People</u>

<u>Generic Floating Support Services</u>
Consultation with stakeholders has highlighted the desire to see an increased number of floating support services. There are a number of client groups that could benefit from such a service, including client groups such as mental health that have not been identified as one of the highest priority groups. It is anticipated that an increase in this type of service will be achieved through some disinvestment in current services, which at present are less able to promote independence.

6.3.2   Although not all client groups have been designated as a priority service for additional investment, this does not mean that they are not considered to be delivering relevant or needed services. For these client groups, for example mental health, current investment in services will continue and attention will be focused on any possible reprovision or redesign of services.

6.3.3   Merton is in the process of completing equalities impact assessments for all service areas and Supporting People is shortly to go into the 'challenge' phase of this programme. Any issues that come up as a result of this will be fed into the action plan following discussion at the Core Strategy Group.

6.3.4   The following is a list of desired actions identified as part of the needs analysis consultation process. Some of these actions are priority actions for the Supporting People programme, whilst others will be investigated as part of a wider programme of meeting the housing support needs of vulnerable people.

Drugs and Alcohol

Develop a generic floating support service with 'champions' for each client group, as many people with drug and alcohol related problems overlap into other service areas.

Reduce the use of bed and breakfast and review access criteria and service provision of current resources, with the intention of increasing use with support from the generic floating support team.

Develop a partnership with a housing association to build another 20 dispersed units.

Adult Offenders

Liaise with the drug and alcohol team to identify the best model of floating support and other joint initiatives such as the 20 dispersed units for people coming out of the Criminal Justice System.

Develop a proposal in partnership with the drugs and alcohol team, Housing Needs Unit and a housing association regarding the possibility of a 12 unit contract.

Expand the capacity of the SMOG service to meet the educational/employment needs of a further 10 individuals per year.

Young Offenders

Commission 3 units (1 interim bed, 1 drug/alcohol bed, 1 bail bed)

Recruit 1 dedicated floating support officer for at least 20 hours per week.

Identify a community rehabilitation programme with fast track opportunities

Physical Disabilities

Maintain current resource allocation in terms of Supporting People funding, but review following more robust research.

Complete an analysis in terms of local need.

Hiv/Aids

Increase the 9 units of accommodation funded by Supporting People by 4, bringing the total up to 13.

Identify a means by which more floating support can be provided.

Undertake an in-depth analysis of local need with regard to this client group.

Older People

Change site based services to community-based services.

Maintain current resource allocation with regard to sheltered housing, with provision to review in a year's time.

Undertake an analysis of housing and care support needs in relation to sheltered housing as part of the wider review of sheltered housing.

Teenage Parents

Maintain the current funding allocation for accommodation-based support, with the provision to review in one year.

Increase the provision of floating support if further research demonstrates on-going need.

Complete a more comprehensive analysis of teenage parents (mother and father) in terms of numbers and need.

Assess the impact of the Sutton crossover scheme.

Re-launch specific services to raise awareness.

Continue development of the Housing Nominations Panel for all young people's services and determine those best placed for involvement (see young care leavers/young people at risk).

Young People Leaving Care/Young People at Risk

Agree a classification of 'high', 'low' and 'medium' needs.

Complete a more robust analysis and reconfigure the services accordingly.

Identify providers and commission more medium –high needs bed spaces.

Develop a floating support service (recommendation of 2 full time officers) with generic and specialist skills to assist permanently placed individuals maintain their tenancy.

Further develop and promote the supported lodgings scheme.

Consider the use of a specific site as identified through the review of HRA land and property as a scheme to provide supported accommodation for 16/17 year olds (in conjunction with providers, 16+ Team and Housing Strategy Team).

Learning Disabilities

Develop a 'key ring scheme' in which 10 units can be developed within walking distance to each other and clients can be supported to develop interdependencies between themselves.

Develop a dedicated team to provide the necessary floating support.

Explore a partnership with a development company who develops housing to buy for people with learning disabilities.

Develop a 'Foyer' scheme for young people/adults with a learning disability to provide supported housing, and associated education and independence skills training.

Single Homeless with Support Needs

Implement the changes to accommodation allocation, maintain the data collection process and link into the generic nominations panel.

Review the changes in provision against the data collected in one year's time.

Maintain current SP resource allocation.

Mental Health

Increase current supported accommodation by 15%.

Maintain current funding in relation to floating support.

Domestic Violence

Identify and commission bed spaces within Merton that will cater for children over 12 years.

Develop a dedicated floating support team for victims of domestic violence.

Identify/commission voluntary access schemes for perpetrators.

Homeless Families

Complete further analysis of families support needs.

Identify a means of providing low level floating support.

Maintain current levels of funding allocation initially.

PART 3

7.   Resources

7.1   The programme is administered in accordance with government grant conditions as set out in section 93 of the Local Government Act 2000. The London Borough of Merton is the administrative authority responsible for administering the grant on behalf of the Commissioning Body.

7.2   The Supporting People grant for 2003-04 was calculated on the basis of the cost of legacy services. The 2004-05 budget was allocated on the same basis but with no inflation and an efficiency target of 2.5%. Merton did not fully meet this efficiency target and the cost of the Supporting People programme in 2004-05 was £108,000 higher than the grant. The gap is being met from other council budgets.

Nationally the budget for Supporting People is £1.8 billion. This was felt by the Treasury to be too high and a review was commissioned. The review concluded that:

- Some legacy provision was overpriced;
- The budget for 2005-06 should be reduced to 1.72 billion;
- The budget for 2006-7 should be around 1.7 billion.

7.3   ODPM have commissioned further work to consider how a distribution formula based on a number of factors, including deprivation, might work. It is anticipated that Merton would benefit from such a formula. However, the ODPM have indicated that any change in funding arrangements will be gradual.

7.4   The Supporting People Grant for 2005-06 will be reduced to £3,345,767, which constitutes a reduction of 5%. The grant allocation is the 15th smallest allocation of 150 administering authorities. This strategy therefore focuses on improving the way in which we deliver current services and continue to focus on value for money in an attempt to redirect funding to those most in need. The aim also is to consider the funding allocation as a five-year total rather than a year on year allocation.

The council's medium term financial strategy has required significant savings across the council's services and it has been necessary to plan for 2005-06 on the basis that the level of funding for services will be limited to the Supporting People grant.
The administration grant has also been cut from £176,703 to £141,362, which represents a 20% reduction. This grant essentially funds the local authority's Supporting People Team whose functions include paying providers of housing support services, reviewing schemes, monitoring provider performance and standards, and ensuring resources are used to best meet the housing support needs of vulnerable people living in the borough.

The grant allocation for Merton is represented below:

04/05 Grant Allocation £	05/06 Grant Allocation £	% difference
3,523,216	3,345,767	-5.0%

The reduction of 5% is consistent with the overall national % reduction but is 0.03% greater than the overall London reduction.

7.5 Based on the figures from ODPM, this level of funding is anticipated to continue at least until the end of 2007-08. This will affect Merton's ability to put any new services in place in order to meet the supply gaps identified. However, during the early stage of the action plan, proposals for new services will be worked up in more detail including indicative costs and timescales as well as a methodology to prioritise proposals. This will enable Merton to be in a good position to implement any developments as and when further resources become available.

8. Value for Money

8.1 We are committed to working in partnership with service providers to improve value for money of the Supporting People programme. The quality and value for money will be measured on a number of levels:

- Quality of the programme overall;
  Success in using the Supporting People budget to achieve priorities set out in the Community Plan and elsewhere.

- Quality of services;
  Success in helping individuals to live independently with measurable outcomes.

- Quality from a service users perspective;
  How good is the service received?

8.2   Assessing Value for Money

This covers issues such as:

- Is Supporting People funding paying only for eligible services;
- Is the cost of support hours reasonable compared to similar services locally, London wide and nationally; and
- Is the number of hours of support provided appropriate for the needs of the service users.

Merton uses ODPM guidance as the framework in these areas. In conjunction with the South-West London group, we are also developing a more formal benchmarking system for cost per hour.

9.   Local Charging Policy

9.1   The Charging Policy was agreed in November 2002 and implemented in April 2003. ODPM set out a number of principles to be followed when deciding who should be charged for Supporting People services. Three groups are not charged:

i)   users of short-term services (i.e. where the intended stay is less than 2 years),

ii)   users of long term services who were not previously charged because their services were financed through the housing revenue account (this applies to tenants in sheltered housing owned and managed by Merton prior to April 2003),

iii)   users of long-term services who receive housing benefit.

Those in long-term accommodation who are not in receipt of housing benefit will therefore be eligible for charges.

Clients on low income may ask to be assessed under Merton's Fairer Charging Policy for non-residential services.

9.2   Over or under payment protocol

Merton has developed an 'under and over payment' protocol. This was needed due to the fact that payments are made to providers in advance. Providers are required to notify the Supporting People Team of any changes they become aware of, and when service users leave.

Where changes have been notified, the next payment to the provider is altered accordingly. If the over payment has been caused by fraud or error by a service user (and the provider could not reasonably have known this) then the council recovers the overpayment from the service user directly. If the overpayment is due to Housing Benefit or fairer charging error (and the provider could not reasonably have known this) then the council does not recover the overpayment.

PART 4

10.   Five-year strategy action plan and annual plan

10.1   The five-year strategy action plan is attached as Appendix 2. The plan reflects the current priorities and takes into account our capacity to manage and deliver change. The plan will inevitably change as resource issues become clearer, as further service reviews are undertaken and as any additional national or local priorities appear. The five-year plan should therefore be seen as something that will evolve over time to reflect national, sub-regional and local developments.

10.2   The annual plan will be prepared for the beginning of each financial year and will reflect the up-to-date position in terms of resources, policies, priorities, etc. It will continue to reflect what Merton can realistically expect to achieve, with the resources available.

11.   Delivering and Monitoring the Strategy

11.1   The purpose of the strategy is to have jointly agreed aims and objectives that set out priorities for action with partners, service providers and people who use Supporting People services over a five-year period.

11.2   In order to achieve the agreed aims and objectives, an action plan has been developed. This sets out in detail what will be done, who will do it, how it will be resourced and when it will be achieved.

11.3   It is clearly important that progress in delivering the strategy is monitored effectively. The monitoring of the strategy is an integral part of the London Borough of Merton's business planning process. The Supporting People Core Strategy Group will oversee the monitoring, review and development of the strategy. The Supporting People Manager will have responsibility for ensuring that the Commissioning Body is kept appraised of progress. The diagram below sets out the framework for delivery of the strategy within Merton:
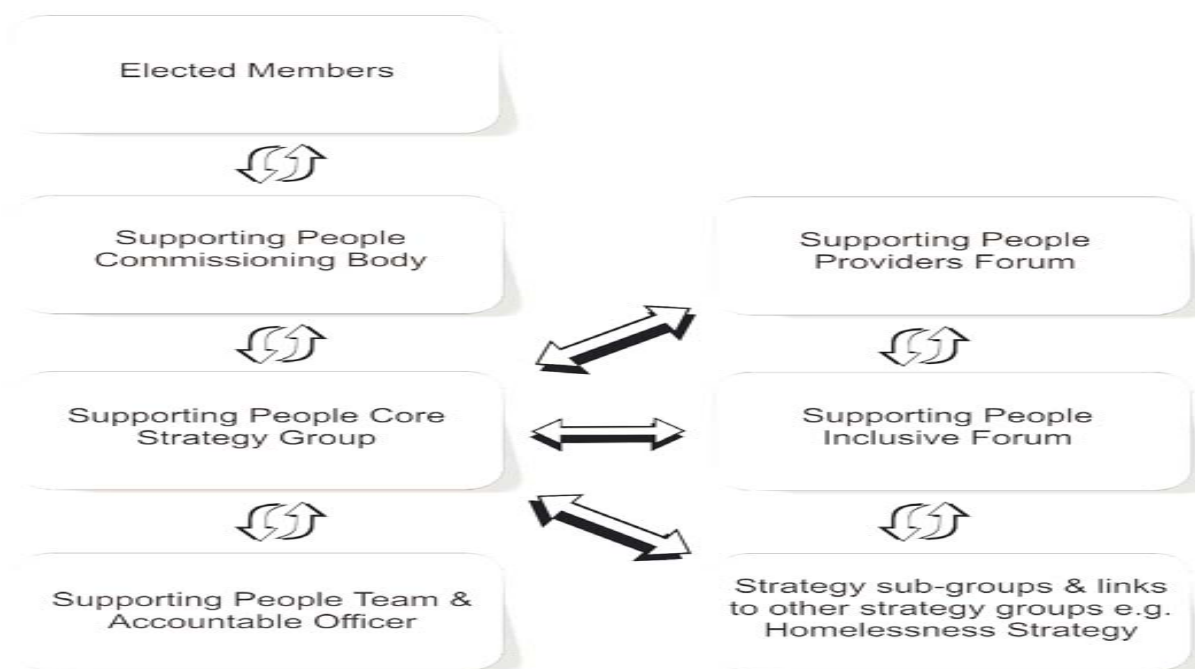
11.4   The process for monitoring the strategy will be:

- A progress report will be provided on a quarterly basis to the Core Strategy Group
- An update of progress will be provided to the Housing Strategy Review Group on a quarterly basis, following discussion at the Core Strategy Group
- An annual review will be presented to the Supporting People Inclusive Forum and this will include a summary of revisions and updates to the strategy
- A full strategy review will be undertaken at the end of Year 2, Year 4 and again at the end of the five-year period in 2010.

11.5   Members of the Supporting People Inclusive Forum have been integral to the development of this strategy. Copies of the strategy have been sent to all Forum members following the submission to ODPM in March 2005.

Copies of the strategy and the annual business plan are available on Merton's website at www.merton.gov.uk/housingpolicy or by writing to:

Supporting People Team
Housing and Social Services Department
1st Floor – Civic Centre
London Borough of Merton
London Road
Morden
Surrey SM4 5DX

APPENDICES

Appendix 1   Commissioning Body and Core Strategy Group membership

Appendix 2   Five-year strategy action plan

Appendix 3   Annual Plan 2005-06

Appendix 4   Glossary of Terms

Commissioning Body membership

Member	Representative	Service area and functional links
Head of Service	Ann Daniels (Chair)	Community Care Services – London Borough of Merton
Head of Service	Peter Mulloy	Housing Strategy and Policy – London Borough of Merton
Assistant Chief Officer – London Probation	Catherine Renau	Probation Services – Merton and Sutton
SP Lead Officer	Eileen Nutting - SP Manager David Ebongodyek - Review and Monitoring Officer	Supporting People Services; South West London Cross-Authority Group
Assistant Director for Older People (Merton locality) - Sutton & Merton PCT	Sally Rickard	Adult Services – Sutton and Merton PCT

Core Strategy Group membership

Member	Representative	Service area and functional links
Supporting People Lead Officer	Eileen Nutting - SP Manager David Ebongodyek - Review and Monitoring Officer	Supporting People - SWLCAG, ALG
Housing Strategy and Policy	Jane Nottage – Housing Strategy & Development Manager (Chair) Steve Langley – Housing Needs Manager	Housing, homelessness, single homeless people with support needs, rough sleepers, RSL development asylum seekers
Commissioning Manager, Drug Action Team	Peter Nash – represented by Michelle Gibbs	Substance misuse, Vulnerable Adults - DAAT
Service Manager, Mental Health	Mark Clenaghan	MH - MH Partnership Board
Service Manager, Learning Disabilities	Helen Cook – represented by Michael Pitt	LD - LD Partnership Board
Senior Probation Officer	Andrew Austen	People leaving penal institutions, people at risk of offending, mentally disordered offenders - Crime & Disorder Reduction Strategy
Assistant Director for Older People (Merton	Sally Rickard	Adult Services – Sutton and Merton PCT

locality) - Sutton & Merton PCT		
Team Manager, Children's Strategy & Development	David Wright	Care leavers, other vulnerable young people
Supporting People Strategy Development Manager (fixed-term)	Hilary Di Salvo	Development of 5-year strategy
Service Manager, Planning & Commissioning	Nancy Adamson	Planning & Commissioning Services across Community Care
Team Manager, Planning & Commissioning	Colin Willard	Planning & Commissioning Services across Community Care
Administrative Assistant – Supporting People	Michael Dockery	Minute-taking and servicing of CSG
Principal Accountant	Bev Tanner	Finance Services – London Borough of Merton

FIVE-YEAR ACTION PLAN

VISION: To enable vulnerable people to maximise their independence by building safe and fulfilling lives in the community through support to their housing circumstances that meets their needs

Objective 1: To improve the needs analysis with a special emphasis on people excluded from services and services to the BME community						
	ACTION	**TARGETS**	**GRPS**	**RESOURCES**	**LEAD**	**YEAR**
1.	Review all existing data sources for priority services and analyse demographic data	• Prepare data research programme • Use data to inform programme by annual review	ALL	Housing Policy	SP Team	1 to 2 3 to 5
2.	Work with partners to capture ethnicity information	• Work with partners to ensure ethnicity information is shared • Work with BME Strategy Group • Monitor ethnicity of service users on quarterly returns • Monitor BME use of services • Cross reference to Merton census/population profile	ALL		SP Team	1 to 2 2 to 3 3 to 5
3.	Ensure racial harassment is identified and dealt with appropriately	• Monitor racial harassment and ensure policies/procedures in place • Assess incidence of racial harassment on annual basis	ALL		SP Team	1 to 2 2 to 3 3 to 5
4.	Develop a protocol for cross-authority accommodation for black elders	• Work cross-authority to develop a protocol • Implement protocol for black elders scheme in Mitcham	BME	LB Croydon Wandsworth Pathway Hsg Assoc, Sutton	SP Team Merton	1 to 2
5.	Review SP funded schemes for women fleeing domestic violence	• Undertake review of all domestic violence schemes • Work cross authority to identify level of access and need	ALL	Service Review	SP Team	1 to 2
6.	Review SP funded schemes for people with HIV/AIDS	• Review HIV/AIDS schemes • Look at providing specialist service/cross-authority • Remodel to provide more floating support	ALL	Service Review South West London Cross Authority Group	SP Team	1 to 2

VISION: To enable vulnerable people to maximise their independence by building safe and fulfilling lives in the community through support to their housing circumstances that meets their needs

Objective 2: Improve our partnership working with services providers, stakeholders, support agencies and service users						
	ACTION	**TARGETS**	**GRPS**	**RESOURCES**	**LEAD**	**YEAR**
1.	Identify joint training agenda with partners, providers and support agencies	• Draw up a joint training programme • Arrange 2 joint training sessions per year	ALL		SP Team	1 to 2 2 to 3 3 to 5
2.	Identify sub-regional training programme	• Draw up and develop sub-regional training programme	ALL	South West London Cross Authority Group	Eileen Nutting Merton	Ongoing
3.	Implement new steady state contracts	• Consult with providers on draft steady state contract • Issue steady state contract following successful review and accreditation	ALL		SP Team	1 to 2 2 to 3 3 to 5
4.	Develop a nomination panel for young single homeless	• Implement a nomination panel for referrals for young homeless clients to ensure the allocation of appropriate accommodation	YP	Merton Young Single Homeless Forum Housing Strategy	Eileen Nutting	1 to 2
5.	Improve joint working between partner organisations	• Hold at least 3 provider/stakeholder forums a year • Arrange regular meetings with users • Develop effective user consultation strategy and implement	ALL		SP Team	1 Ongoing
6.	Improve working with Partnership Boards to deliver the SP programme	• Work with Mental Health Partnership Board to complete a mental health based assessment for SP • Establish programme of working with other Partnership Boards	MH		PCT & CMHT Team SP Team	2 to 3
7.	Ensure Merton makes a strong contribution to the developing sub-regional agenda for SP	• To ensure Merton is represented at SWLCAG and Housing & Review Officers sub-group and the Cross-Authority Providers Forum	ALL	South West London Cross Authority Group	Wandsworth Richmond Croydon Sutton	1 to 2 2 to 3 3 to 5

VISION: To enable vulnerable people to maximise their independence by building safe and fulfilling lives in the community through support to their housing circumstances that meets their needs

Objective 3: To work with other boroughs to develop accessible services for people across borough boundaries						
	ACTION	**TARGETS**	**GRPS**	**RESOURCES**	**LEAD**	**YEAR**
1.	Investigate opportunities for cross-authority services for specialist support services	• Work with SWLCAG to provide and jointly fund specialist support	HIV/AIDS DV	SMOG Probation	Eileen Nutting	2 to 3 3 to 5
2.	Improve the position of crisis accommodation	• Define availability of crisis accommodation for specific client groups in Merton and SW London sub-region • Monitor use of crisis accommodation	ALL	Steve Langley South West London Cross Authority Group	Eileen Nutting	1 to 2 2 to 3 3 to 5
3.	Increase housing and support options for ex-offenders	• Review support and accommodation for ex-offenders • Work with probation, SMOG and support agencies, mental health and dual diagnosis • Identify joint funding opportunities • Meet with partners 4 times per year	EX OFF	Probation Steve Langley SMOG	Eileen Nutting	1 to 2 2 to 3 3 to 5
4.	Increase housing and support options for people with substance misuse problems	• Review support and accommodation for people with substance misuse • Work with DAAT, DIP and other support agencies • Identify resources and opportunities for joint funding • Meet with DAAT team 6 times a year	DRUG/ ALCOHOL	South West London Cross Authority Group DAAT SMOG	Eileen Nutting	1 to 2 2 to 3 3 to 5
5.	Increase support options for offenders and people at risk of offending	• Review support and accommodation for people at risk of offending and offenders • Work with SMOG, probation services • Identify resources	ALL	SMOG Probation	Eileen Nutting	1 to 2 2 to 3 3 to 5

VISION: To enable vulnerable people to maximise their independence by building safe and fulfilling lives in the community through support to their housing circumstances that meets their needs

Objective 4: Increase resources towards generic floating support services and get the balance right between accommodation based services and floating support						
	ACTION	**TARGETS**	**GRPS**	**RESOURCES**	**LEAD**	**YEAR**
1.	Review the provision of floating support	• Develop a plan to shift the balance towards floating support with priorities identified • Measure progress on an annual basis • Work with SW London authorities to increase the provision of jointly commissioned floating support • Identify resources through decommissioning/remodelling schemes • Disinvest in current SP, Housing Support Service and reconfigure to provide more floating support	ALL		SP Team	1 to 2 2 to 3
2.	Ensure the support needs of households placed in temporary accommodation are met	• Monitor needs of clients in temporary accommodation • Meet quarterly with Housing Needs Manager • Benchmark service with other local authorities	ALL	Steve Langley	SP Team	1 to 2 2 to 3 3 to 5

VISION: To enable vulnerable people to maximise their independence by building safe and fulfilling lives in the community through support to their housing circumstances that meets their needs

Objective 5: Improve communications with an emphasis towards service users and access to services						
	ACTION	**TARGETS**	**GRPS**	**RESOURCES**	**LEAD**	**YEAR**
1.	Improve the communication strategy for Supporting People in Merton	• Identify information needs of stakeholders and deliver through web-based services, documentation, seminars and training • Achieve translation of appropriate information into the main community languages • Develop an SPK website on Merton intranet site • Ensure that all documentation is accessible to providers and stakeholders • Review accessibility of SP information through the Merton website • Promote Supporting People in some mainstream Council publications • Provide Supporting People awareness training for appropriate front line staff • Produce a leaflet about Supporting People • Produce a leaflet on access to Supporting People Services for Young People • Promote access and advice through MYSHF for Young People • Improve the Supporting People newsletter and consider wider distribution to doctors surgeries, health clinics, probation offices etc	ALL		Eileen Nutting Marketing Manager	1 to 2
2.	Promote the involvement of service users with each service review	• Work with providers, carers, support agencies and partners to encourage service users to be involved in reviews • Arrange 3 service user forums each year	ALL		SP Team	1 to 2 2 to 3 3 to 5
3.	Ensure carers are brought into the consultation process	• Arrange a forum for carers • Develop an information pack • Develop links with Welfare to Work Forum	ALL		Eileen Nutting	1
4.	Increase the awareness of Supporting People to community groups, faith groups and other relevant organisations	• Produce an information leaflet • Visit community groups, faith groups, support agencies • Arrange an annual forum	ALL		Eileen Nutting Marketing Manager	1-5

VISION: To enable vulnerable people to maximise their independence by building safe and fulfilling lives in the community through support to their housing circumstances that meets their needs

5.	Undertake an awareness campaign to inform ethnic minority communities about housing options available	• Develop links with ethnic minority groups • Produce literature in main BME languages • Design poster advertising Supporting People services	ALL		SP Team	1 to 2 2 to 3 3 to 5

6.	Increase Member and Chief Officer involvement in Supporting People	• Director represents Supporting People at Corporate Management Team
		• Arrange quarterly briefings to:
		   o Cabinet Members for Housing and Community Care
		   o Joint Consultative Committee for Ethnic Minorities
		   o Health and Community Care Panel
			ALL	Head of Service	SP Team	1-5

VISION: To enable vulnerable people to maximise their independence by building safe and fulfilling lives in the community through support to their housing circumstances that meets their needs

Objective 6: Set high standards for quality and value for money in the service review programme and performance monitoring						
	ACTION	**TARGETS**	**GRPS**	**RESOURCES**	**LEAD**	**YEAR**
1.	Review governance arrangements	• Review arrangements on annual basis with: ▪ Focus on partnerships/value for money/efficiencies and overall programme development	ALL		CB	Ongoing
2.	Provide a clear risk management and contingency plan to address the potential issue of service failure	• Produce a risk management and contingency plan • Monitor plan on annual basis	ALL		Ann Daniels Eileen Nutting	1 to 2
3.	Prepare a review agenda plan for providers	• Produce a schedule of reviews • Publish review timetable annually	ALL		SP Team	1 to 2 2 to 3 3 to 5
4.	Work with providers to improve performance from level C to B and B to A	• Review action plans for providers following service review • Monitor action plans	ALL		SP Team	1 to 2 2 to 3 3 to 5
5.	Continue to work with SWLCAG to develop a more formal benchmarking system for cost per hour	• Develop cross-authority benchmarking • Meet monthly with members of SWLCAG • Link with ALG • Meet twice a year with SW & SE London Group	ALL		Eileen Nutting	1 to 2 2 to 3 3 to 5
6.	Benchmark services cross-authority, London and nationally	• Benchmark services cross-authority, London and nationally • Use good practice guides and initiatives	ALL		SP Team	1 to 2 2 to 3 3 to 5
7.	Agree a common definition of high, medium and low support across sub-region to standardise practice	• Agree definition and implement	ALL	South West London Cross Authority group	Eileen Nutting	2 to 3
8.	Provide a value for money, efficiency and value improvement strategy	• Agree statement on VFM, Efficiency and Value Improvements • Develop a value for money protocol to be used across authorities • Benchmark costs for each service	ALL	South West London Cross Authority group	Eileen Nutting	1 to 2 2 to 3 3 to 5
9.	Improve joint working with other London boroughs and learn from good practice	• Meet monthly with officers from SWLCAG • Use good practice from other authorities to improve services	ALL	South West London Cross Authority Group	Kingston	1 to 2 2 to 3 3 to 5

VISION: To enable vulnerable people to maximise their independence by building safe and fulfilling lives in the community through support to their housing circumstances that meets their needs

Objective 7: Use the budget creatively, linking with other funding streams for multi dimensional needs and ensure the overall programme is cohesively linked into corporate plans and wider partnerships						
	ACTION	**TARGETS**	**GRPS**	**RESOURCES**	**LEAD**	**YEAR**
1.	Work up proposals for potential new services in more detail including indicative costs and timescales	• Identify gaps in services • Work with Housing Strategy & Development Team to consider new accommodation bids • Work up proposals on a capital and revenue basis for bid proposals	ALL		Housing Strategy Development	1 to 2 2 to 3 3 to 5
2.	Work with SWL sub-regional authorities to develop an integrated supported housing strategy	• Contribute to SW London Housing Strategy with a focus on Supported Housing provision	ALL		Eileen Nutting	1 to 2 2 to 3 3 to 5

VISION: To enable vulnerable people to maximise their independence by building safe and fulfilling lives in the community through support to their housing circumstances that meets their needs

Objective 1: To improve the needs analysis with a special emphasis on people excluded from services and services to the BME community						
	ACTION	**TARGETS**	**GRPS**	**RESOURCES**	**LEAD**	**YEAR**
1.	Review all existing data sources for priority services and analyse demographic data	• Prepare data research programme • Use data to inform programme by annual review	ALL	Housing Policy	SP Team	1 to 2
2.	Work with partners to capture ethnicity information	• Work with partners to ensure ethnicity information is shared • Work with BME Strategy Group • Monitor ethnicity of service users on quarterly returns • Monitor BME use of services • Cross reference to Merton census/population profile	ALL		SP Team	1 to 2
3.	Ensure racial harassment is identified and dealt with appropriately	• Monitor racial harassment and ensure policies/procedures in place • Assess incidence of racial harassment on annual basis	ALL		SP Team	1 to 2
4.	Develop a protocol for cross-authority accommodation for black elders	• Work cross-authority to develop a protocol • Implement protocol for black elders scheme in Mitcham	BME	LB Croydon Wandsworth Pathway Hsg Assoc Sutton	SP Team Merton	1 to 2
5.	Review SP funded schemes for women fleeing domestic violence	• Undertake review of all Domestic Violence Schemes • Work cross authority to identify level of access and need	ALL	Service Review	SP Team	1 to 2
6.	Review SP funded schemes for people with HIV/AIDS	• Review HIV/AIDS schemes • Look at providing specialist service/cross-authority • Remodel to provide more floating support	ALL	Service Review South West London Cross Authority Group	SP Team	1 to 2

VISION: To enable vulnerable people to maximise their independence by building safe and fulfilling lives in the community through support to their housing circumstances that meets their needs

Objective 2: Improve our partnership working with service providers, stakeholders, support agencies and service users						
	ACTION	**TARGETS**	**GRPS**	**RESOURCES**	**LEAD**	**YEAR**
1.	Identify joint training agenda with partners, providers and support agencies	• Draw up a joint training programme • Arrange 2 joint training sessions per year	ALL		SP Team	1 to 2
2.	Identify sub-regional training programme	• Draw up and develop sub-regional training programme	ALL	South West London Cross Authority Group	Eileen Nutting Merton	Ongoing
3.	Implement new steady state contracts	• Consult with providers on draft steady state contract • Issue steady state contract following successful review and accreditation	ALL		SP Team	1 to 2
4.	Develop a nomination panel for young single homeless	• Implement a nomination panel for referrals for young homeless clients to ensure the allocation of appropriate accommodation	YP	Merton Young Single Homeless Forum Housing Strategy	Eileen Nutting	1 to 2
5.	Improve joint working between partner organisations	• Hold at least 3 provider/stakeholder forums a year • Arrange regular meetings with users • Develop effective user consultations strategy and implement	ALL		SP Team	1 Ongoing
6.	Ensure Merton makes a strong contribution to the developing sub-regional agenda for SP	• To ensure Merton is represented at SWLCAG and Housing & Review Officers sub-group and the Cross-Authority Providers Forum	ALL	South West London Cross Authority Group	Wandsworth Richmond Croydon Sutton	1 to 2

VISION: To enable vulnerable people to maximise their independence by building safe and fulfilling lives in the community through support to their housing circumstances that meets their needs

	ACTION	TARGETS	GRPS	RESOURCES	LEAD	YEAR
Objective 3: To work with other boroughs to develop accessible service for people across borough boundaries						
1.	Improve the position of crisis accommodation	• Define availability of crisis accommodation for specific client groups in Merton and SW London sub-region • Monitor use of crisis accommodation	ALL	Steve Langley South West London Cross Authority Group	Eileen Nutting	1 to 2
2.	Increase housing and support options for ex-offenders	• Review support and accommodation for ex-offenders • Work with probation, SMOG and support agencies, mental health and dual diagnosis • Identify joint funding opportunities • Meet with partners 4 times per year	EX OF	Probation Steve Langley SMOG	Eileen Nutting	1 to 2
3.	Increase housing and support options for people with substance misuse problems	• Review support and accommodation for people with substance misuse • Work with DAAT, DIP and other support agencies • Identify resources and opportunities for joint funding • Meet with DAAT team 6 times a year	DRUG/ ALCOHOL	South West London Cross Authority Group DAAT SMOG	Eileen Nutting	1 to 2
4.	Increase support options for offenders and people at risk of offending	• Review support and accommodation for people at risk of offending and offenders • Work with SMOG, probation services • Identify resources	ALL	SMOG Probation	Eileen Nutting	1 to 2

VISION: To enable vulnerable people to maximise their independence by building safe and fulfilling lives in the community through support to their housing circumstances that meets their needs

Objective 4: Increase resources towards generic floating support services and get the balance right between accommodation based services and floating support						
	ACTION	**TARGETS**	**GRPS**	**RESOURCES**	**LEAD**	**YEAR**
1.	Review the provision of floating support	• Develop a plan to shift the balance towards floating support with priorities identified • Measure progress on an annual basis • Work with SW London authorities to increase the provision of jointly commissioned floating support • Identify resources through decommissioning/remodelling schemes • Disinvest in current SP, Housing Support Service and reconfigure to provide more floating support	ALL		SP Team	1 to 2
2.	Ensure the support needs of households placed in temporary accommodation are met	• Monitor needs of clients in temporary accommodation • Meet quarterly with Housing Needs Manager • Benchmark service with other local authorities	ALL	Steve Langley	SP Team	1 to 2

VISION: To enable vulnerable people to maximise their independence by building safe and fulfilling lives in the community through support to their housing circumstances that meets their needs

Objective 5: Improve communications with an emphasis towards service users and access to services						
	ACTION	**TARGETS**	**GRPS**	**RESOURCES**	**LEAD**	**YEAR**
1.	Improve the communication strategy for Supporting People in Merton	• Identify information needs of stakeholders and deliver through web-based services, documentation, seminars and training • Achieve translation of appropriate information into the main community languages • Develop an SPK website on Merton intranet site • Ensure that all documentation is accessible to providers and stakeholders. • Review accessibility of SP information through the Merton website • Promote Supporting People in some mainstream Council publications • Provide Supporting People awareness training for appropriate front line staff • Produce a leaflet about Supporting People • Produce a leaflet on access to Supporting People Services for Young People • Promote access an advice through MYSHF for Young People • Improve the Supporting People newsletter and consider wider distribution to doctors surgeries, health clinics, probation offices etc	ALL		Eileen Nutting Marketing Manager	1 to 2
2.	Promote the involvement of service users with each service review	• Work with providers, carers, support agencies and partners to encourage service users to be involved in reviews • Arrange 3 service user forums each year	ALL		SP Team	1 to 2
3.	Ensure Carers are brought into the consultation process	• Arrange a forum for carers • Develop an information pack • Develop links with Welfare to Work Forum	ALL		Eileen Nutting	1
4.	Increase the awareness of Supporting People to Community groups, faith groups and other relevant organisations	• Produce an information leaflet • Visit community groups, faith groups, support agencies • Arrange an annual forum	ALL		Eileen Nutting Marketing Manager	1 to 5

VISION: To enable vulnerable people to maximise their independence by building safe and fulfilling lives in the community through support to their housing circumstances that meets their needs

5.	Undertake an awareness campaign to inform ethnic minority communities about housing options available	- Develop links with ethnic minority groups - Produce literature in main BME languages - Design poster advertising Supporting People services	ALL		SP Team	1 to 2
6.	Increase Member and Chief Officer involvement in Supporting People	- Director represents Supporting People at Corporate Management Team - Arrange quarterly briefings to: - Cabinet Members for Housing and Community Care - Joint Consultative Committee for Ethnic Monitories - Health and Community Care Panel	ALL	Head of Service	SP Team	1 to 5

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Objective 6: Set high standards for quality and value for money in the service review programme and performance monitoring						
	ACTION	**TARGETS**	**GRPS**	**RESOURCES**	**LEAD**	**YEAR**
1.	Review governance arrangements	• Review arrangements on annual basis with: ▪ Focus on partnerships/value for money/efficiencies and overall programme development			SP Team	1 to 2
2.	Provide a clear risk management and contingency plan to address the potential issue of service failure	• Produce a risk management and contingency plan • Monitor plan on annual basis	ALL		Ann Daniels Eileen Nutting	1 to 2
3.	Prepare a review agenda plan for providers	• Produce a schedule of reviews • Publish review timetable annually	ALL		SP Team	1 to 2
4.	Work with providers to improve performance from level C to B and B to A	• Review action plans for providers following service review • Monitor action plans	ALL		SP Team	1 to 2
5.	Continue to work with SWLCAG to develop a more formal benchmarking system for cost per hour	• Develop cross-authority benchmarking • Meet monthly with members of SWLCAG • Link with ALG • Meet twice a year with SW & SE London Group	ALL		Eileen Nutting	1 to 2
6.	Benchmark services cross-authority, London and nationally	• Benchmark services cross-authority, London and nationally • Use good practice guides and initiatives	ALL		SP Team	1 to 2
7.	Provide a value for money, efficiency and value improvement strategy	• Agree statement on VFM, Efficiency and Value Improvements • Develop a value for money protocol to be used across authorities • Benchmark costs for each service	ALL	South West London Cross Authority group	Eileen Nutting	1 to 2
8.	Improve joint working with other London Boroughs and learn from good practice	• Meet monthly with officers from SWLCAG • Use good practice from other authorities to improve services	ALL	South West London Cross Authority Group	Kingston	1 to 2

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Objective 7: Use the budget creatively linking with other funding streams for multi dimensional needs and ensure the overall programme is cohesively linked into corporate plans and wider partnerships						
	ACTION	TARGETS	GRPS	RESOURCES	LEAD	YEAR
1.	Work up proposals for potential new services in more detail including indicative costs and timescales	• Identify gaps in services • Work with Housing Strategy & Development Team to consider new accommodation bids • Work up proposals on a capital and revenue basis for bid proposals	ALL		Housing Strategy Development	1 to 2
2.	Work with SWL sub-regional authorities to develop an integrated supported housing strategy	• Contribute to S W London Housing Strategy with a focus on Supported Housing provision	ALL		Eileen Nutting	1 to 2

TERM	INITIALS	MEANING
Supporting People	SP	The Supporting People programme is designed to fund support services, which help improve people's lives and maintain independence within their own homes.
Commissioning Body	CB	Partnership of senior representatives with decision-making powers from the Administering Authority (housing and social services). Probation and Primary Care Trusts.
Distribution Formula	DF	Formula used to allocate SP grant across Administering Authorities.
Transitional Housing Benefit	THB	The Transitional Housing Benefit Scheme (THBS) was introduced to maintain stability within the sector whilst the SP programme was developing. It was taken over by the Supporting People grant on the 1st April 2003.
Housing Corporation	HC	The body that funds and regulates Housing Associations. This includes funding for building new properties.
Supported Housing Management Grant	SHMG	Money given by the Housing Corporation to Housing Associations to develop schemes.
Probation Accommodation Grant Scheme	PAGS	Grant paid by the Home Office to Probation services to fund accommodation and support for ex-offenders. PAGS funding for support was transferred over to the Supporting People Grant on the 1st April 2003.
Better Care Higher Standards	BCHS	A national charter for all adults and their carers who need care or support over the long term.
Local Strategic Partnership	LSP	Consists of representatives from the public, private and voluntary sector. It is designed to develop and pursue a vision for neighbourhood renewal and improve the delivery of local services through better planning.
National Health Service	NHS	Provider and Administrator of Health Services
Housing Investment Programme	HIP	The Annual Plan each Local Authority makes for its housing capital programme. It forms the bid for resources to build, repair and improve their housing stock.
Greater London Authority	GLA	The GLA is a citywide government for London. It is made up of a directly elected Mayor - the Mayor of London - and a separately elected Assembly - the London Assembly. The GLA's main areas of responsibility are transport, policing, fire and emergency planning,

TERM	INITIALS	MEANING
		economic development, planning, culture, environment and health.
Community Plan	CP	Long term plan identifying resident priorities for action in their communities. Also aims to promote economic, social and environmental well-being of the community.
Partnership Boards		Learning Disability Partnership Boards operate within the Local Strategic Partnership framework. They bring together public, private, community and voluntary sector organisations to provide effective local co-ordination of strategic planning and development.
Core Strategy Group CSG	CSG	Group that is responsible for ensuring the progress of the Supporting People programme and driving improvements. Makes recommendations to the Commissioning Body and engages in overseeing the Supporting People action plan, receiving performance monitoring reports, receiving financial reports, monitoring the effectiveness of partnership working and identifying additional funding opportunities across the partnership.
Local Public Service Agreement	LPSA	A semi-formal arrangement covering the services that one department within a Local Authority will provide to another.
Primary Care Trust	PCT	Merton and Sutton PCT are responsible for planning and providing healthcare services in the borough. They are partners in the Supporting People programme, along with Housing, Social Services and Probation.
Office of the Deputy Prime Minister	ODPM	This is the government department that has overseen the implementation of Supporting People and monitors the performance of each administering authority.
Quality Assessment Framework	QAF	Providers self assess their service against national objectives (such as consulting service users on how they want the service to be run). The Supporting People team use the results as part of the benchmarking process, with the aim of continually improving the quality of services in Merton.
Care and Repair		Home Improvement Agency that offers advice and advocacy, they also help to access funding and provide technical advice around repairs.
Housing Needs Service		The Housing Needs Service is a key player in delivering the Homelessness Strategy. The Housing Needs Team provides services

TERM	INITIALS	MEANING
		such as housing advice, registration and allocations, homeless persons unit and home sales and initiatives.
Association of London Government	ALG	Oversee and support work of all of the London Borough's.
South West London sub-region		Partnership group, which consists of the following Local Authorities: Merton, Sutton, Kingston, Croydon, Richmond, Wandsworth and Lambeth.
Fairer Charging Policy	FCP	For chargeable services a Fairer Charging financial assessment can be done for service users who do not qualify for Housing Benefit. A locally set means test is used to assess how much, if anything, service users have to pay for their support service.
Health Improvement and Modernisation Programme	HIMP	Supports health improvement and funds projects which promote health and well-being in the community.