

Supporting People Older Persons Services and Supporting People Short Term Services Strategic Review 2014 Service User Questionnaires: key messages

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Introduction

This report presents key messages from two questionnaires:

- Supporting People Older Persons Services Strategic Review 2014 Service User Questionnaire
- Supporting People Short Term Services Strategic Review 2014 Service User Questionnaire

The questionnaires were sent out on 23 and 24 June. The main aim was to gather views on current support services in order to help in the design of new services. The aims of the Short Term services questionnaire also included identifying what is most valued in the services and the impact services have when people find themselves in need of support.

5,809 paper copies of the Supporting People Older Persons Services Strategic Review 2014 questionnaires were sent to service users via service providers. Service providers were also given an electronic version so may have printed and sent out more copies. The survey was also available online via Survey Monkey. 1852 completed questionnaires were received, meaning the response rate was approximately 32%. This response rate, whilst common for paper surveys, is low, so the key messages may not be representative of the views of all service users.

1202 paper copies of the Supporting People Short Term Services ~Strategic Review questionnaires were sent to service users. The survey was also available online via Survey Monkey. 300 completed questionnaires were received, meaning the response rate was approximately 25%. This is a low response rate, so the key messages may not be representative of the views of all service users.

The closing date for receipt of questionnaires was 17th July 2014.

Ethical considerations

The questionnaires were considered by Hampshire's Research Development and Governance Panel, a panel which includes independent experts and works to maintain the rights and dignity of service users. The panel approved the Older Person's Services questionnaire on 10th June 2014 and the Short Term Services questionnaire on 11th June 2014.

Method of analysis

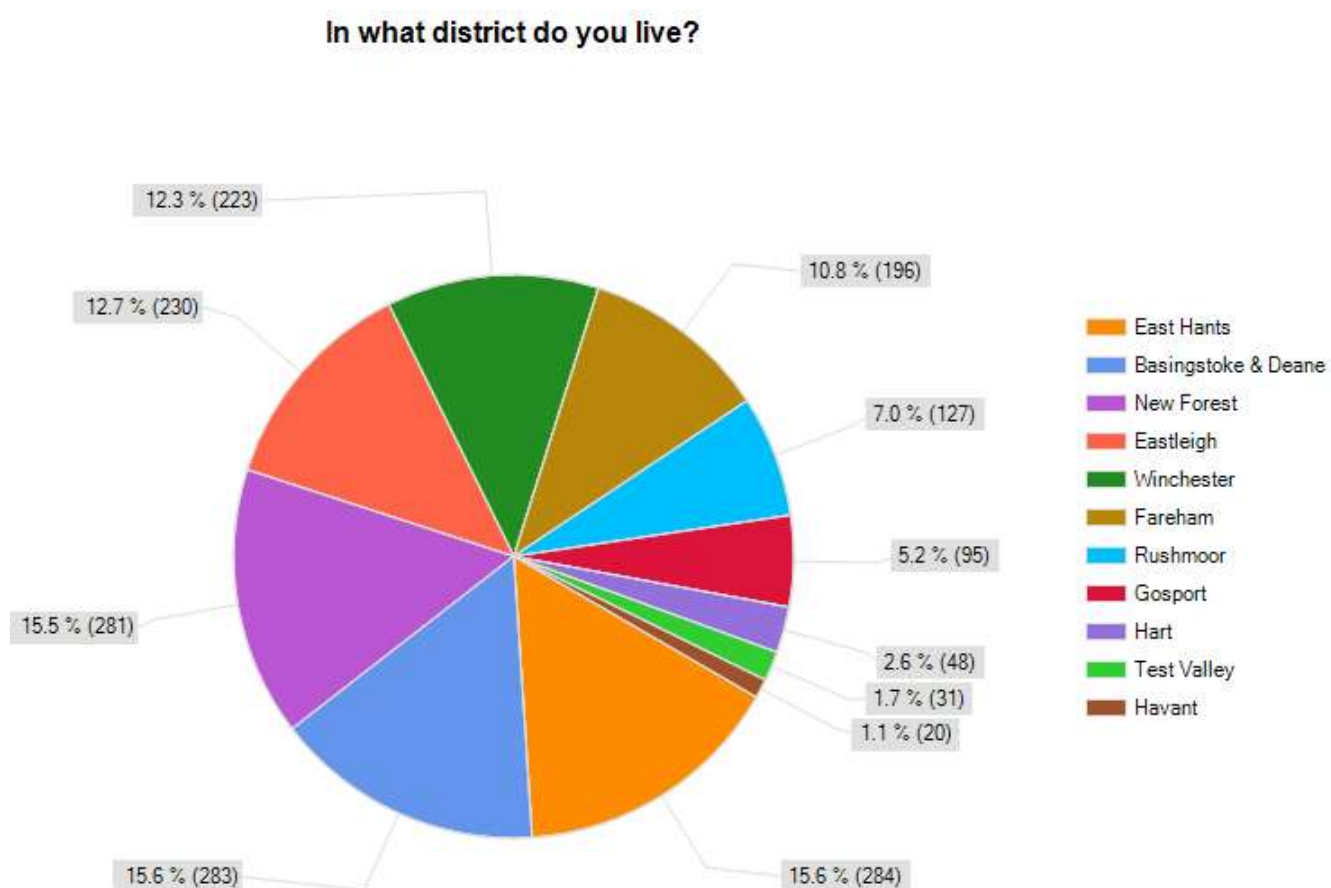
Basic content analysis was used: word frequency counts were performed on the answers to free text questions to identify words that might be associated with key messages (common and strong points made). The prominent words were then looked at in context, i.e. the researcher looked at the sentences in which they were found in order to form inferences about common messages. Synonyms were also

identified to help understand the relative importance of concepts in terms of numbers of people expressing a similar sort of viewpoint. The researcher also read all responses in full and considered them in relation to emerging key messages. As this report focuses on the key messages rather than listing all individual viewpoints, when it comes to considering future commissioning arrangements further analysis of responses would be desirable.

Who responded?

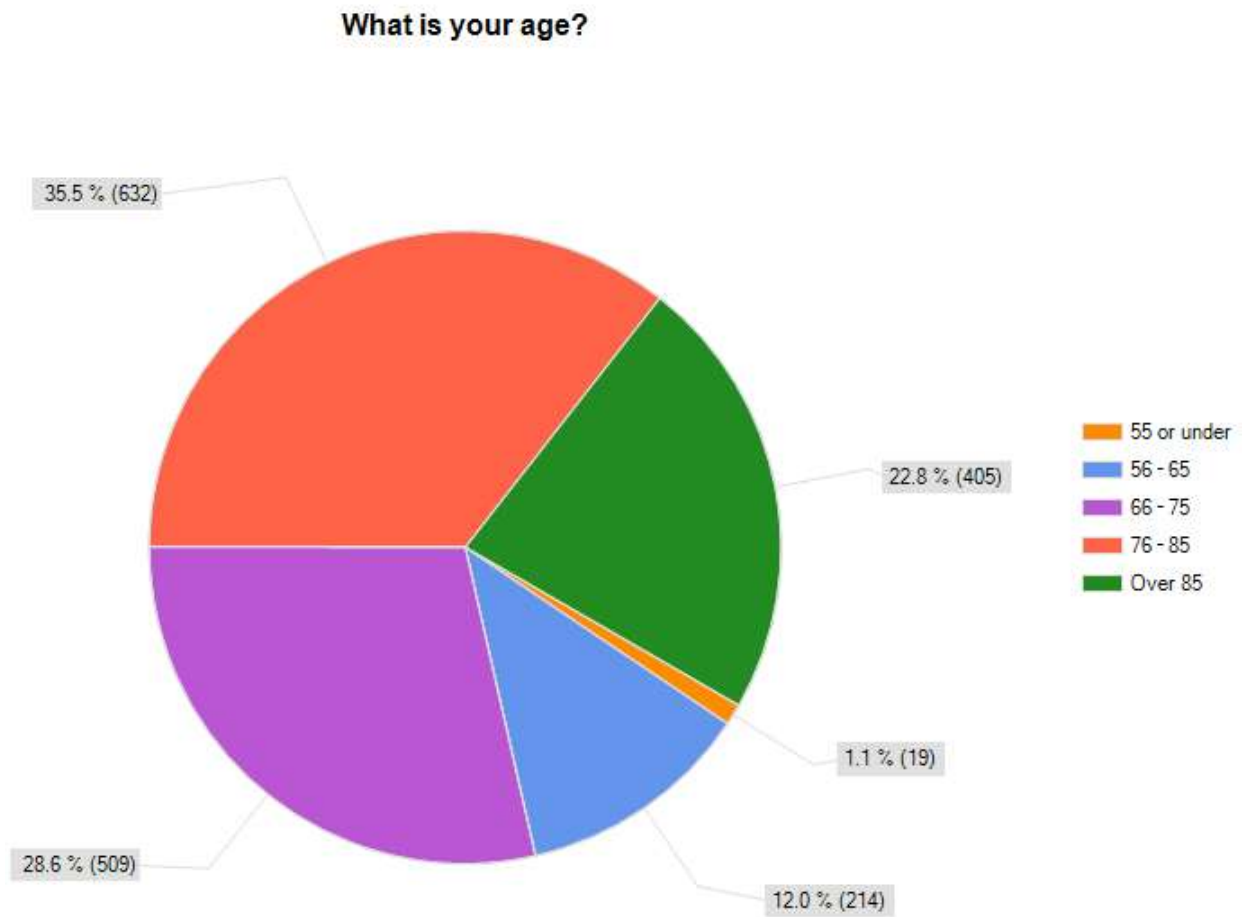
Supporting People Older Persons Services Strategic Review 2014 Service User Questionnaire

- 1852 people responded to the Older Persons questionnaire. Some chose not to answer the demographic questions in the questionnaire, so numbers below do not always add up to 1852.
- 1523 (82%) were from people in sheltered accommodation.
- 329 (18%) were people receiving floating support.
- There were respondents from every district in Hampshire, with the largest number coming from East Hampshire (284, 16%).



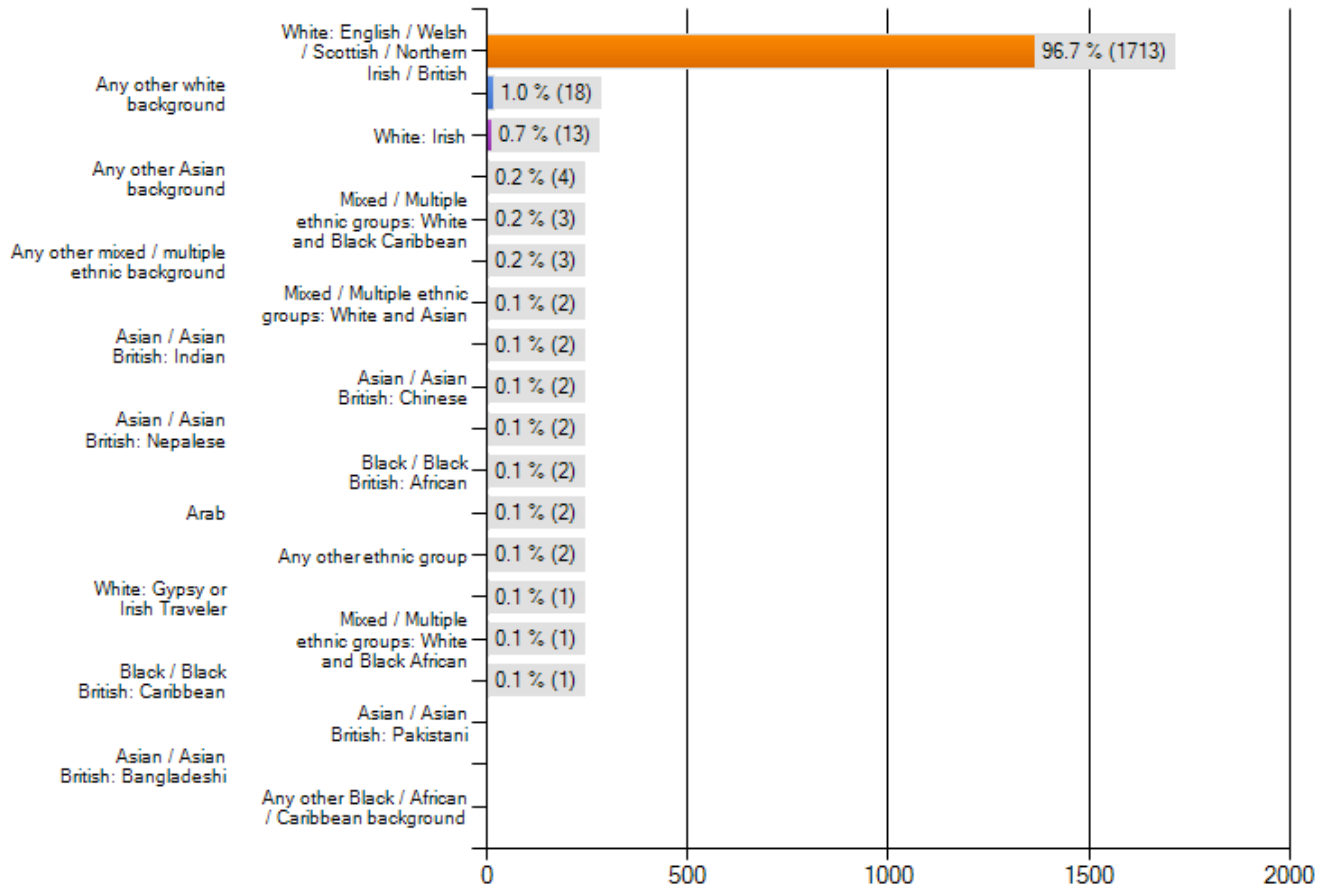
- 604 (34%) of the respondents were male, 1200 (68%) were female and six (0.3%) were Transgender.

- Most of the respondents were aged over 75. The biggest group of respondents were those aged 76-85 (630 people, 35.5%). 405 (23%) were aged over 85.



- The vast majority of respondents were White: English / Welsh / Scottish / Northern Irish / British (97%), with very small numbers of respondents from a wide range of ethnic groups.

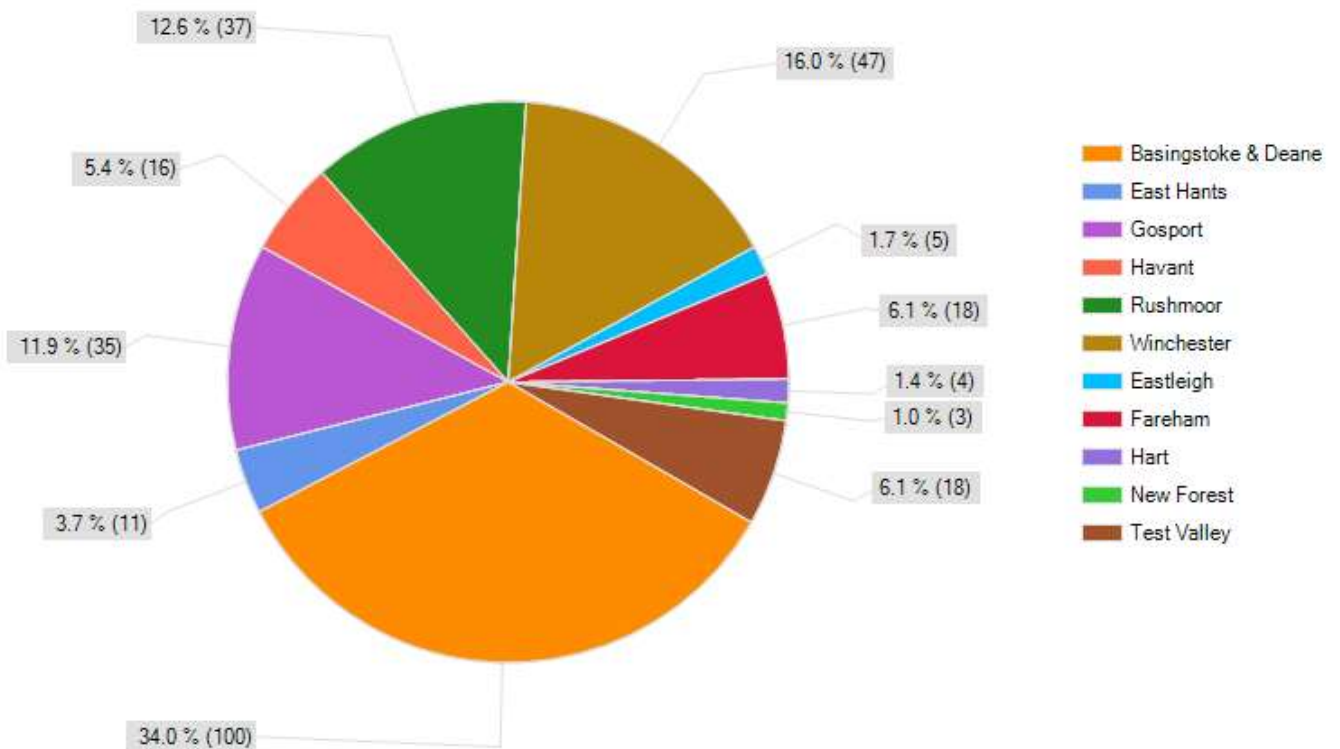
What is your Ethnic Group? Please choose one option that best describes your ethnic group or background.



Supporting People Short Term Services Strategic Review 2014 Service User Questionnaire

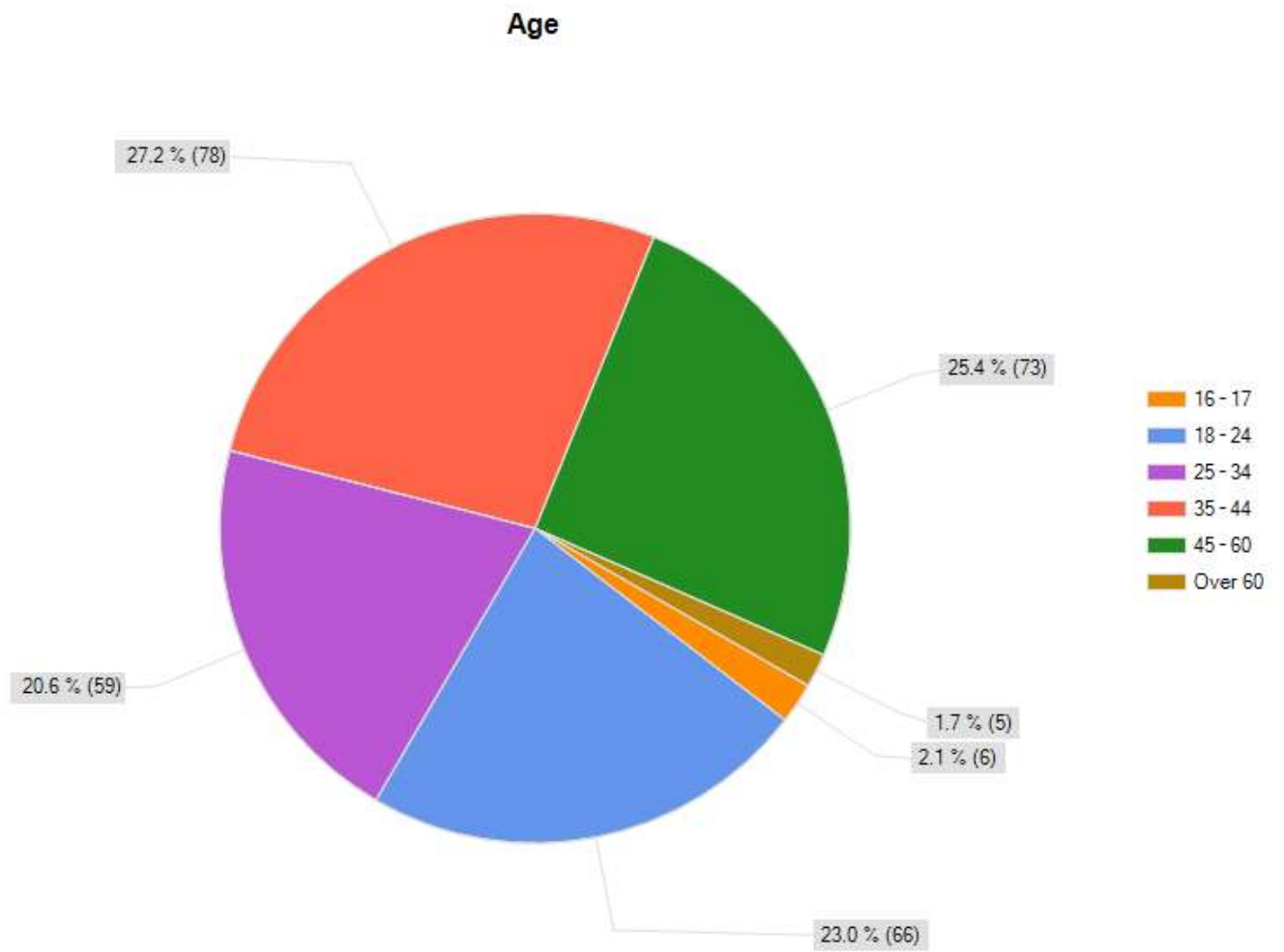
- 300 people responded to the Short term Services questionnaire. Some chose not to answer the demographic questions in the questionnaire, so numbers below do not always add up to 300.
- 40% (121 people) used a supported housing project.
- 35% (104 people) were receiving floating support.
- 25% (75 people) used a hostel.
- There were respondents from every district in Hampshire, with the largest number coming from Basingstoke and Deane (34%, 100 people).

Where do you live?



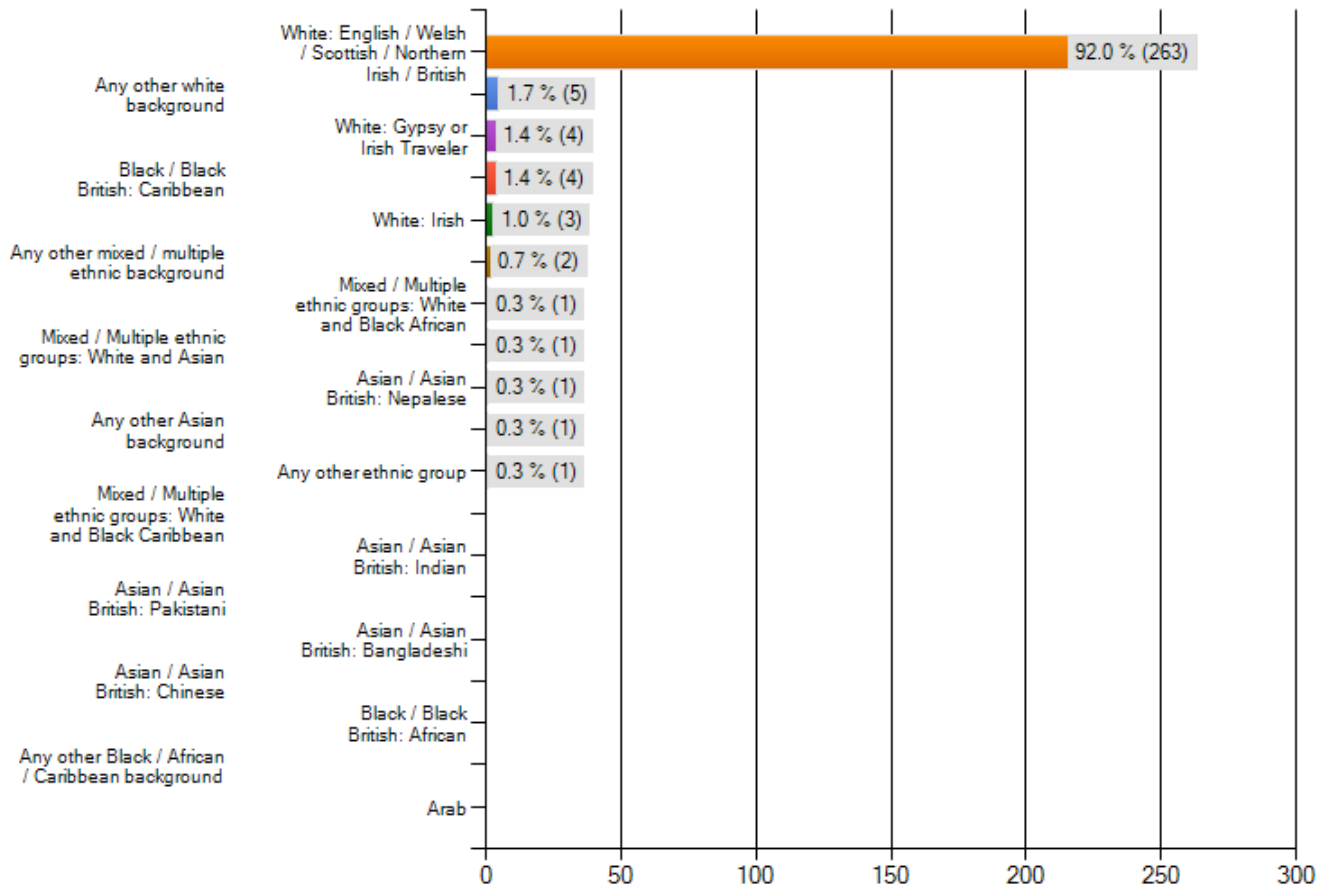
- 53% of respondents (152 people) were male and 47% (137) were female.

- The highest number of responses came from the 35-44 age group (27%).



- The vast majority of respondents were White: English / Welsh / Scottish / Northern Irish / British (92%), with small numbers of respondents from some other ethnic groups.

Ethnic Group Please choose one option that best describes your ethnic group or background.

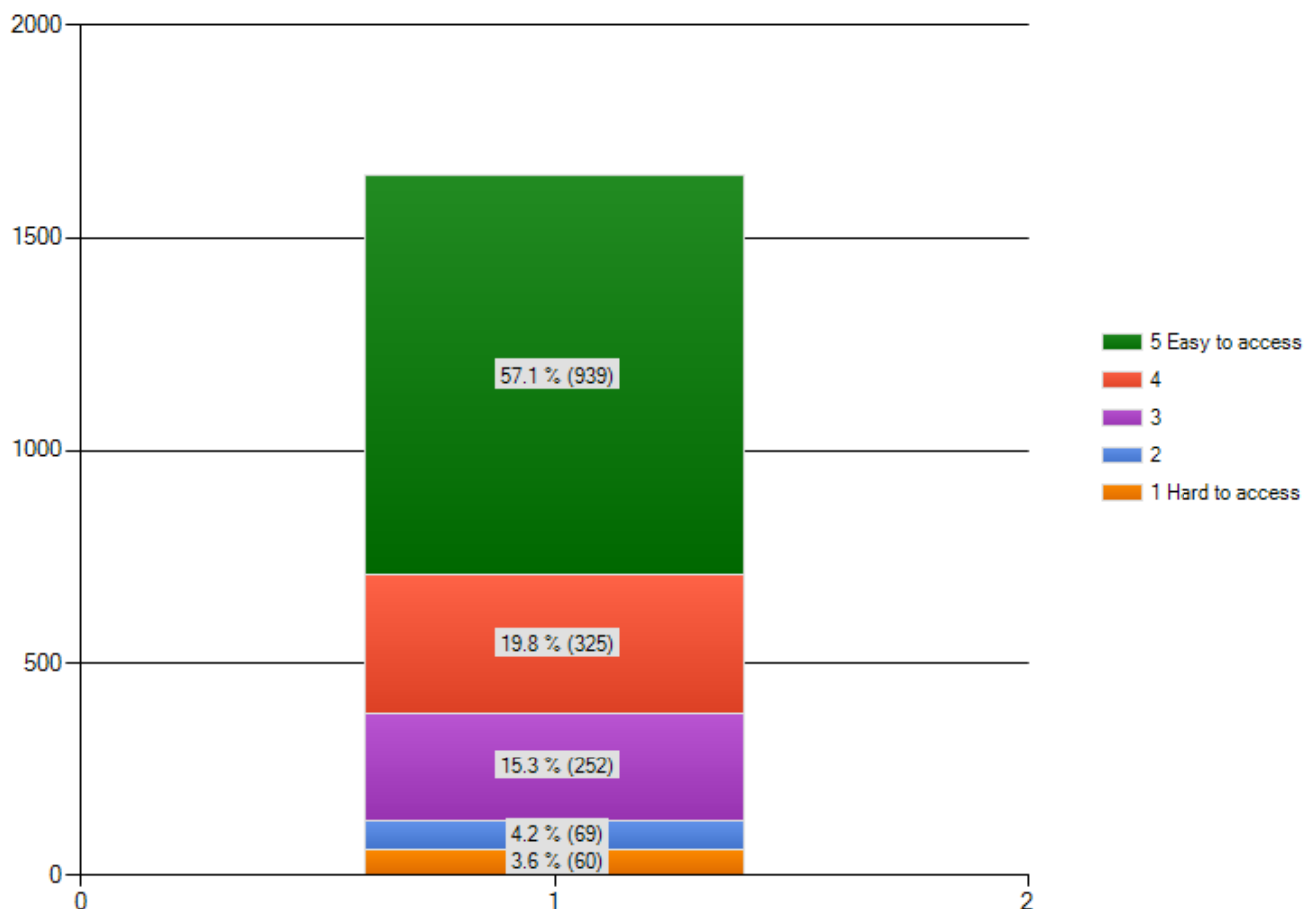


Key messages from the Supporting People Older Persons Services Strategic Review 2014 Service User Questionnaire

Ease of access

- The majority of respondents (57%) said the service was easy to access, with 55% in sheltered accommodation and 66% in floating support saying it was easy to access. However, it should be noted that 60 people in total (54 in sheltered accommodation; six with floating support) said the service was hard to access.

Was it easy to access this service? Please choose the number that best fits your views on a scale of 1-5 with 1 being the hardest and 5 being easiest.



Seeing a support worker

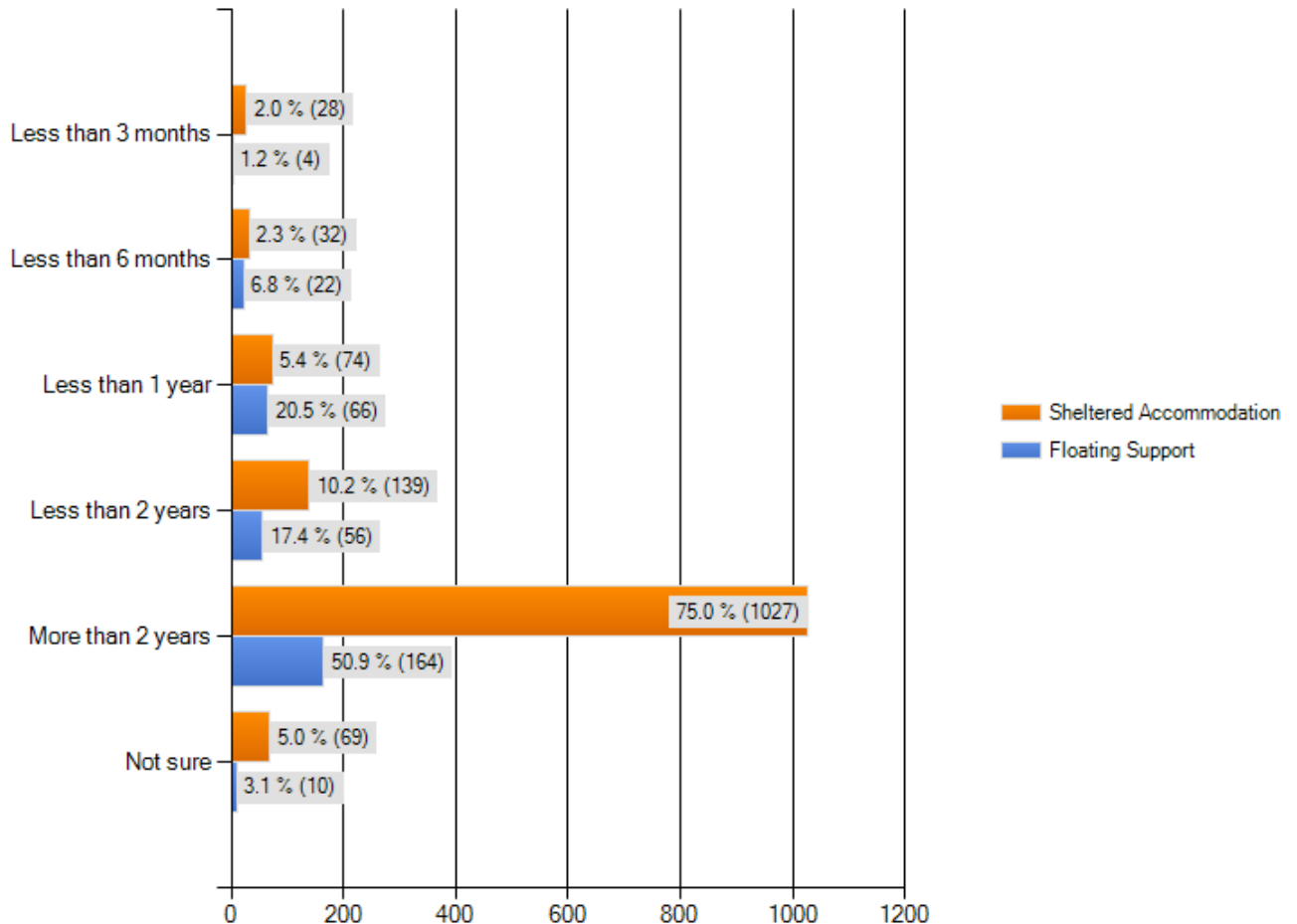
- Whilst 1% of the total respondents said they saw their support worker too much, 20% said they did not see their support worker enough. The remaining 79% said they saw their support worker enough.

- 12 people in sheltered accommodation said they saw their support worker too much. The frequency this group were seeing someone varied substantially per individual, ranging from five days per week to one every three months to check the alarm system is working. A couple of them said they were basically paying for a service they didn't want and/or didn't receive. Some said the service had no impact on them.
- Five people using floating support said they saw their support worker too much. Two were seeing a support worker weekly and one fortnightly. One of them said they did not need the service.
- 289 people in sheltered accommodation said they did not see their support worker enough. What is 'not enough'? Some of the 289 were seeing a worker every day but found this was not enough. Some of the 289 said they never saw their support worker. Others were findings that seeing a support worker occasionally, monthly, fortnightly, weekly or on weekdays was not enough, or just received calls rather than face to face visits and felt this was insufficient.
- 47 people using floating support said they did not see their support worker enough. What is 'not enough'? Approximately a third of those getting 'not enough' support were seeing a support worker or getting a telephone call monthly. Others ranged from seeing a support worker every day or on weekdays, to 'as needed' or once a year.

How long people have been using the service

- The majority of respondents had been using their service for over two years (overall = 70%, sheltered accommodation = 75%, floating support = 51%).

How long have you been using this service?

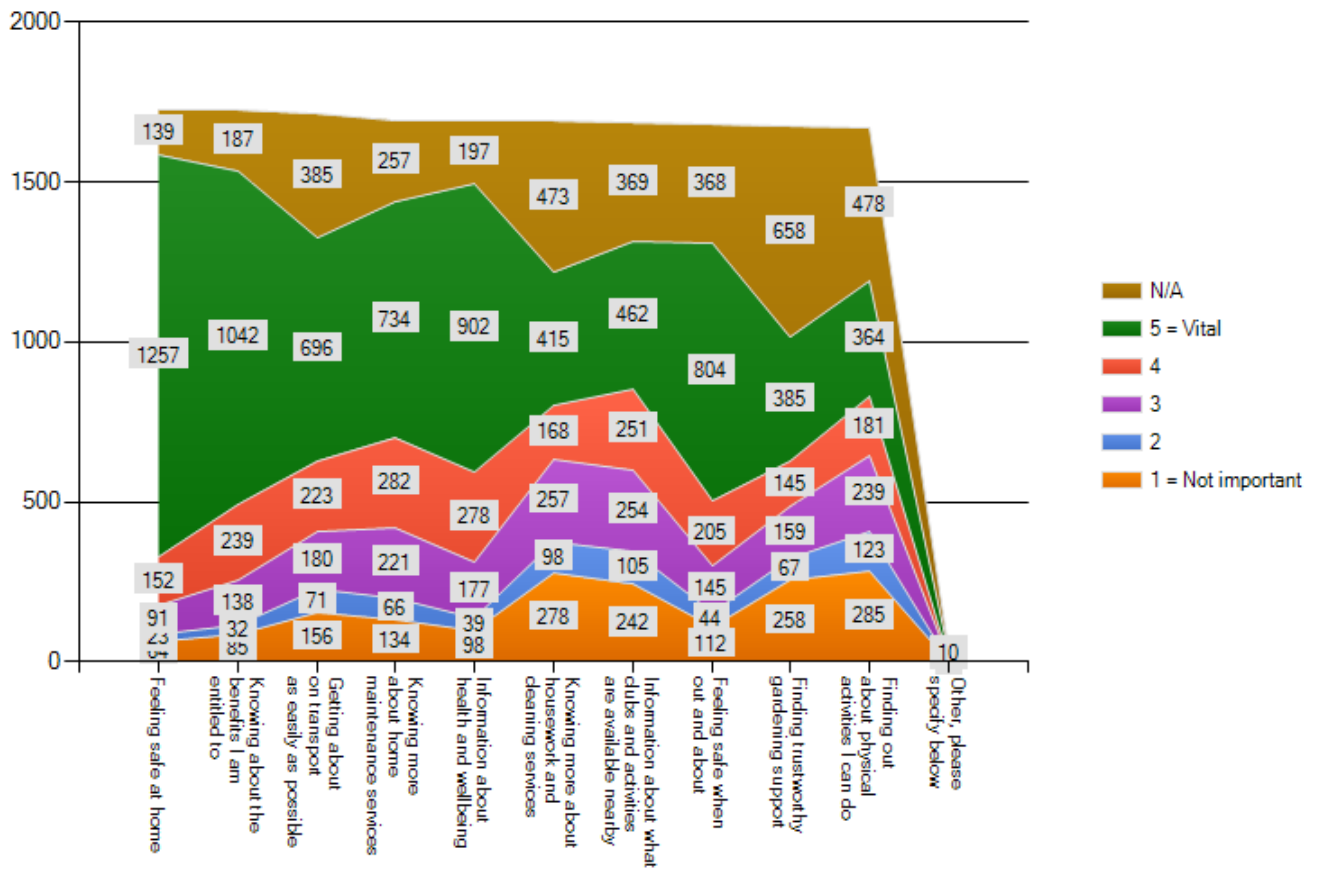


The importance of different aspects of the service

- Respondents were asked to rate aspects of support provided by the service from 1-5, with 1 meaning ‘not important’ and 5 meaning ‘vital’.
 - 73% of respondents rated ‘Feeling safe at home’ as vital. This was the support most commonly rated as ‘vital’ by people in sheltered accommodation (73% of those respondents in sheltered accommodation; 70% of those respondents receiving floating support).
 - The type of support people receiving floating supported most commonly rated as ‘vital’ was ‘Knowing what benefits I am entitled to’ (72%; 58% of those in sheltered accommodation; 60.5% overall).

- Over half of respondents (53%) rated 'Information about health and wellbeing' as 'vital'. After this, the services most commonly marked as 'vital' were 'Feeling safe when out and about' (48%), 'Knowing more about home maintenance services' (43%) and 'Getting about on transport as easily as possible' (40%).
- The type of support people most commonly said they 'didn't need' was 'Finding trustworthy gardening support' (39%) but it is important to note that this support was considered to be vital by a over a fifth (23%) of respondents (385 people). The type of support people most commonly said was 'not important' was 'Finding out about physical activities I can do'. Nonetheless, 22% (364 people) said it was 'vital'.

The service you are using offers a range of personalised support. Please give each type of support a score out of 5 to show how important this is to you. If you do not need the support listed please circle N/A.



Other support people would like from the service

- When asked if there was any other support they would like to receive from the service, if possible, 583 people responded. Over 100 said 'no', the service is fine as it is. The most common requests were for

- The scheme manager to be on site all day Mon-Fri or a warden living at the scheme and available 24/7 to deal with emergencies. People wanted cover at weekends and holidays. People stressed that having wardens or scheme managers on site helped with security, gave them assistance with problems and social contact – and might be the only person they ever speak to. People wanted more time with the managers or wardens, for them to be more easily accessible and to be in contact more- preferably face-to-face. Many wanted personal daily visits or calls from the manager or warden. Some said they wanted calls at weekends. Some wanted support workers to be available 24/7 instead of just Mon-Fri 9-5.
- The pull cord/alarm/pendant/care line system to continue – many people said they could not do without it or would not be able to live safely without it.
- Help with correspondence and communication (e.g. phone calls, filling in forms, and dealing with bills). Many people said they need help with these things due to sight problems. Many others said they currently get help with correspondence and communication and clearly wanted this type of support to continue.
- Affordable gardening support, or better gardening services at their scheme. People were worried about the appearance of the gardens - both their own gardens and the maintained communal areas in schemes. Some people said they were unable to look after their own garden due to disability and the state of the garden was a worry for them. Some said that communal gardens looked a mess, the gardeners made mess and things were not cut enough. Some people said there was a grass cutting service and that they appreciated it.

Other support some people said they would like to receive included

- Help with budgeting and finances – ranging from help and advice about benefits, physically getting money out, paying bills and debt management, to financial assistance.
- Transport, especially for food shopping and going to hospital and appointments. More buses. Someone to take people out in a car and assist/accompany them. Special transport for wheelchairs. Tokens for taxis instead of a bus pass.
- Information and advice, including information about The Royal National Institute for the Blind (RNIB) (many respondents mentioned problems with sight), information given face to face on how to lead a happy healthy life and be less lonely, exercise classes, activities, help to find

an appropriate holiday (i.e. for disability) and advice on sorting out problems.

- Social activities, 'get togethers' or communal exercise classes at the scheme, entertainment or outings for residents (e.g. where they made a regular contribution to fund meals out or day trips). People mentioned a lack of a community feel in their schemes and many said they wanted more company. Some spoke about community facilities being unused and there being nothing to do.
- Support for mental health and emotional needs. Some to talk to who will be sympathetic.
- Advocacy.
- Someone to act as a go between with the housing office and with the different departments in the housing association.
- Meals on wheels.
- Help with mobility and getting out and about, e.g. someone who will take you out for a coffee in your wheelchair.
- Help with shopping.
- Help with decorating (i.e. finding and arranging to have a decorator).
- A handyman or help with sorting out repairs. Some had a handyman service and said they wanted it to continue.
- Help with housework/cleaning or more home help.
- Help to learn how to do household chores e.g. ironing.
- Disabled parking spaces or a place to put and charge a scooter.
- Referrals to health, social services and for housing adaptations.
- Specific housing adaptations or repairs e.g. shower seat, new toilet.
- Social services, e.g. Personal care, including help to have a bath.
- Hairdressing and chiropody.
- Help to get prescriptions.
- Laundry room.
- A clearer list of emergency contacts.

- CCTV. A couple of respondents mentioned problems with door bells being rung in the night.

Some people said they received no support and some said they did not know what services they should be getting as they had no information. Some were not happy as they were paying for services they didn't use. A few others said they were glad services were there, even if they didn't use them yet.

Social contact

- Asked about their social situation, the majority of respondents (57%) said they have as much social contact they want with people they like. However, 11% said they had some but not enough and 6% (100 people) said they have little social contact with people and feel socially isolated. There was little difference between the social situation of people receiving floating support and those in sheltered accommodation.

What is good about the support the service has given

- When asked what is good about the support the service has given, 1400 people responded. The most common answer, which came from hundreds of people, was: knowing that someone/help is there for you if/when you need it. Hundreds of people said having access to staff (wardens/scheme managers or support workers) and/or having pendants/pull cords/alarms gave them peace of mind, eased worry and made them feel safe and secure at home. There was a view that staff and the pull cords/alarms were essential to feeling safe at home and to wellbeing. Some said they would not be able to live at home without the staff and pendants/pull cords/alarms. Some also gave examples of how their pendant/pull cord/alarm had saved them.

“Knowing that the support is available makes us feel safe and secure especially if any thing happens to one of us illness etc. the support and help will be there.”

“At night I know I am secure. The care alarm service gives me peace of mind as I know I can get help pressing the button or pulling the cord. Having a scheme manager on site is also a great help to me.”

“It is very comforting to know that there is help at the end of the lifeline if needed. All the people there are always so cheerful and helpful.”

“After several bouts of illness in the last year the support of the scheme manager and in particular the Careline service has been invaluable. The Careline has been a lifesaver on several occasions in the last 9 months to call out paramedic services leading to hospitalisation. This service is essential for very aged persons as they become more frail. The scheme manager is sometimes the only person some persons see in a day.”

"I am a 91 year old lady with Alzheimer's and prone to falls. I have a necklace alarm, falls bracelet, bed sensor and door sensor. When one of these go off the wardens contact me straight away to make sure I am safe, if I am not they send someone out to assess the situation and act upon in the appropriate manner. I would not be able to stay in my home if this service is withdrawn or outsources as the wardens know me and how to deal with my needs."

"Feel safe and secure in my home and can look after myself and with my life pendant. I know if I fall I just press my button and someone can come and send for my children."

"It gives a sense of security knowing I can pull the cord in an emergency or call on the lifeline for less urgent help."

"The fact I can call on my support worker at anytime to sort out any issues I may have. I know I can rely on them."

"I can stop worrying as I know I have someone to turn to; I have reliable and regular support which is vital to me as I have no family to turn to."

"Peace of mind. I don't worry as much as I know my support worker will help and avoid any problems."

"Knowing that there is someone close daily is comforting."

"That I see someone very often. I feel safe knowing that I have a pendant and pull cords at home."

- People talked about both emotional and practical support that staff had given them. Some said the support had eased the stress of trying to cope or talked about how the support from staff had improved their lives and maintained independence. Some of the specific things people valued about the service from staff included:
 - Friendliness and being supportive and caring;
 - Visits;
 - Daily calls (telephone or intercom) to check welfare;
 - Reliability of support workers;
 - Having someone who will listen and solve problems;
 - Advice and information about finances, social opportunities, housing, home help, transport, benefits and other services;
 - Help with correspondence and forms;

- Referrals (to OT, social services, etc.), liaising with agencies and help arranging other services;
- Provision of/arranging social activities or meals.

“The support I receive has helped me stay independent and live at home. My diet and health has improved and I am now able to socialise and make new friends.”

“My warden has helped me move home twice. She has helped me set up direct debits so I do not have to worry about bills.”

“Very friendly. Helpful and friendship. Someone to share problems and look for solutions. Access services and advice.”

“The manager advises me well on financial problems.”

“If it hadn’t been for a leaflet that came through the door I would not have known about this service and I would possibly have lost my independence. Since the lady visited me I now have a shower with chair, as I could no longer get into the bath, I have had falls and I now have a lifeline to call for assistance. I have a lady to shop, gardening service, I also have more money to help pay for assistance. I have been ill if it hadn’t been for her visiting calling doctor I may have ended up in hospital as I don’t like to bother people. I have family but they all have to work and have their own families to take care of. She gives my family peace of mind that someone keeps an eye on me when I am ill she visits me regularly and I look forward to her visit.”

“My warden helped me get a shower in when I was ill and came every week.”

“The manager helps me to fill in forms and deal with utility companies. She helps to sort out neighbour problems.”

“Important advice and support about money problems and social events.”

“Social activities - bingo, craft clubs, coffee mornings support from warden to complete paperwork and ensure as carers that we receive more / sufficient support.”

“I was not managing my correspondences, I could not use my bath and I was struggling to get on and off the toilet. I was isolated and wasn’t able to get out. My support worker sorted all my paperwork out, made an OT referral for a toilet frame and shower. Referred me to the call and go bus and got me shopping and meal deliveries.”

“Alarm system. Coffee morning and activities in communal lounge. This would affect me massively if these were to be taken away.”

- Some said they liked the gardening services or the garden. It was clear that this type of support brought peace of mind to some residents.
- Some said they liked that the premises are secure.
- Some said they liked the handyman service.
- Some said they got personal care packages
- Some said they valued the communal lounge - it gave them the opportunity to spend time with other residents.
- Some said one of the good things was that the service brought peace of mind to their families.

Several people said they had no support, felt unsupported or that support had dwindled to nothing. Some said they were unhappy at paying for services that they did not use. Some said they did not feel safe or secure and lacked confidence at times when no warden was on site. There was criticism of some wardens for being unhelpful or not stimulating social life at the scheme.

Improvements to the service

- When asked what improvements they would like to see made to the service, if it were possible, 1019 respondents gave an answer. 818 were from sheltered accommodation and 201 were using floating support. One of the most common responses was that there are no improvements to make - the service is fine how it is. A great many said they happy with the service they were currently receiving and want or need to keep their scheme manager, support worker, pull cords, pendants and alarm system.

"I must have the alarm system - I need help in an emergency. Scheme manager liaises with my care company, friends and family. Also helps with paperwork, reading letters, she is there if I need her."

"I am happy with the way things are at the moment and would have worries if the alarm system went."

"To keep our scheme managers. Most people need to talk to her, from saying "hello" to how important problems like I had, when I had cancer. She was there for me everyday. Absolutely vital to my mental and physical wellbeing!"

"The service [floating support] is excellent as it is it has helped me a lot over the years. I don't think there is anything you can do to improve it."

The improvements most commonly suggested included:

- Having a dedicated scheme manager or warden on site all the time or at least full time Mon-Fri. Some said they felt unsafe when the manager or warden was offsite.
- To see more of/spend more time with the scheme manager, Independent Living Officer (ILO), warden or support worker. People wanted more time spent face-to-face, not just a quick hello on the intercom.
- Have support workers or supported accommodation staff available at evenings and weekends - some wanted face to face contact, some wanted 'communication'.
- Have more social activities at the home or outings. Many spoke about problems with social isolation and wanted more ways of enabling residents to socialise with one another. Some said there used to be organised activities or trips but these had stopped.
- Better communal gardening services – with better cutting, weeding etc.
- Care visits to be on time.

Improvements suggested by some included:

- Better security, such as CCTV, stopping non residents coming on site and providing better communication about whether people on site are expected/there legitimately.
- A faster response when the pull cord system is used.
- Updating the pull cord system.
- More support with bills and paperwork.

The impact the service has had on people

- Asked what impact the service has had on them personally, 1262 people responded. The vast majority spoke about positive impacts, with a great many saying the service had made their life better and happier.
 - Hundreds said that knowing the service/ scheme manager and /or pull cord/pendant/alarm was there for them if they needed help has given them security, reassurance, safety and peace of mind. Some gave examples of when pull cords/pendants or staff had saved them.

“Having a scheme manager gives me peace of mind as I know help is available 24-7. I have no immediate family to come to my aid.”

"My health has been poor this year and I have been happy to know that I could use the pull cord if I fall. It was there when I needed an ambulance for my husband before he died."

"I feel safe in my home knowing that there is somebody on the end of the red cord that can help or advise me."

"To feel safe and secure and to know help is at hand if I am ill I just pull the helpline cord. This has helped me considerably in the past, enabling me to get medical attention."

"It has helped me live without fear. Given me hope as I get older, I know I can get help and support when I need it quickly."

"I feel safe, secure. This has stabilised my mood especially in the winter months. This would normally be the time I would be at risk."

"I feel safe knowing I can always get help if needs be. Very caring people. After having had major heart surgery I am always aware of my health and feel so grateful to have this service at the pull of a cord."

"The emergency services ambulance has been called twice to me via the pull cords - they are our safety net."

"When they are here I am secure. I have been signed off from the hospital for my fits have decreased, I feel relaxed because I know I can always call on someone or talk to someone."

"I am 98 years old, I have used the alarm system to call for help 3 times when I have fallen. The consequences don't bear thinking about if I didn't have an alarm system how would I have raised the alarm? Having this service I have peace of mind, take it away and I have nothing."

"She has helped me a lot every day. I could not live with this service. When I fell out of my wheel chair outside the door [name of staff] called the ambulance and gave me medical help on the phone to 999. She stopped the bleeding until the ambulance arrived. She phoned my sons and told them what had happened. We are so grateful she was there. I had a broken hip and a big of skin missing from my head. She does an amazing job for all of us."

"Vibrating pillow makes me feel safer at night."

"If we didn't have a manager I do not think I could manage. I would feel very unsafe and insecure. I would also worry if we did not have a pull cord system I would not feel safe."

"Living alone, it gives me a feeling of safety with the bell pulls available in an emergency."

- Roughly 150 said the service was enabling them to stay living independently or to stay in their own home. Many said the service was preventing the need to go into a care home. Some felt they would not be allowed to stay, or could not stay, if they did not have alarms or staff, because they would not be safe or could not cope.

“It has meant that I can still live independently at home and this is where I wish to stay. Having this service means that I can get the help when I need it or the help from other services to keep me at home. I am 96 I do not have care I am very independent with the aids and help I get. I worried about managing my home but don’t now as I get help with these things.”

“Allowed to stay in my own home - everything is handy - 24hr support throughout the day and night means I can feel safe.”

“Given me more confidence staying in my own home instead of going into a rest home.”

“Without the service I could not live alone in my own home. Service provides very good support and can also be flexible. Support is reliable and consistent.”

“Made me happy as I can stay in my own home.”

“Enhanced my life and made it possible for me to live in my own home independently. Support is flexible and I know I have someone I can rely on.”

“It has helped me manage to continue living in the bungalow longer.”

“Great help - helped me to maintain my independence longer. Alarm is very important. Come to rely on support of scheme manager - cannot do without them or the alarm system.”

“I couldn’t manage without it. I had a fall recently and hurt myself and pulled the cord the manager came and helped me.”

“My lifeline kept me independent and was well supported. I would have ended up in a care home without this service.”

“Recently had deteriorating health - cannot physically walk anymore so totally reliant on alarm system to call for help. I need this to remain, it is vital for me. I use alarm to call district nurses as I am catheterised - message passed onto them so they can come out and fix it. I am a vulnerable person please do not put me at risk by taking away my alarm and scheme manager. What would I do? How would I cope?”

“The manager is a good help - my memory is poor and the help lets me stay in my home.”

"I could not live independently without all the services. I do not want anything to be changed."

- Many people said the service brought better quality of life or better physical or mental health and wellbeing. A few said the service had saved their life or the life of their spouse. People said the service gave them confidence (which helped them stay independent), made them more relaxed and made them happy. Many put this down to knowing someone was there to help (either staff or via the pull cord/pendant/alarm system) and feeling safe, and/or because a support worker, warden or scheme manager helps them sort out any problems they have, and is someone to talk to. People also said support provided, such as dealing with correspondence, liaising with other organisations and giving information and advice, reduced their anxiety and stress.

"It has given me confidence, it is so nice knowing if I get any problems they came straight out to sort them out. I am living a better quality of life now - at times I was worried how I would cope."

"I am happier and more inclined to become involved in social and other activities. I no longer see myself as just another old person who is a burden to her family. I have the confidence to do more for myself."

"Gives me more confidence in my actions e.g. money, social, family etc."

"I am recovering addict and the support I have has helped me to move to more suitable accommodation, sort out all my debts, manage my finances, speak on my behalf and improve my physical and mental health."

"Without this service I would not be able to manage my health. She checks my wellbeing, make sure meds are correct as I can't see and often hospital change my meds."

"This service has helped me through many tough times and to try and stabilise my mental health and been very reassuring to me."

"Helped in a thousand ways, through my mental health illness, having someone to express my feelings and anxiety to."

"My general health is a lot better, we have easy access to a doctors surgery, I am very lucky I can go out quite a lot, my mobility has improved a great deal. I managed to go on holiday with the help of friends. My life has been more eventful since I have been living here."

“Vital to my wellbeing that I remain independent in my home. I feel safe, secure and am able to feel confident expressing my health and wellbeing concerns to my scheme manager as we have built up trust.”

“My health has improved immensely and I am more out going.”

“Makes me feel like a person again not just an old person that means nothing.”

“My life has improved dramatically if you stop the service you are stopping my lifeline.”

“It has made me more confident, I do not have any close family or anyone to look out for me. I am a 94 year old lady who tries to do what I can, but without my worker I would be in a mess.”

“Even though I obviously feel isolated because I am deaf, having somebody checking on me everyday helps me emotionally.”

“My life would be more stressful and worrying without it.”

“I rely on the service to talk to people on my behalf.”

“Remain independent in my own home. Puts me at ease as I know someone is there to help with form filling and finding out information. Having the service makes me feel less anxious. Can access services that I would be unable to access without support.”

“Knowing we can look forward to a weekly visit, who will help if we have a query.”

“It is nice to know that a caring hand is willing to help with problems.”

“The provision of a safe and congenial environment in which to move has been greatly appreciated and has contributed to a great sense of well being.”

“They helped me to get things in order and solve all the problems.”

“It saved my life. I was homeless living in daughter’s shed and needed help. Thank you district council.”

“Assisted with knowing services are available in the area. Motivation to go to the GP surgery. Helped getting blood tests any X-rays; this made me feel valued and motivated to get up.”

“To have someone to talk to if need at times of stress.”

“Less strain and worry as I have someone to help me. Support given with forms, housing related problems and general advice and guidance.”

“It gave me hope that my life was not over, since they put everything in place for me I have had a better quality of life.”

“Taken the pressure off and stopped me and my husband from worrying.”

“Relieved me of my stress and concerns meaning I can sleep easier.”

“Taken away a huge worry, helped me gain my confidence back.”

“Makes me less anxious/worried. paperwork, bills, post always sorted. Hospital and GP transport arranged. Liaises with others on my behalf.”

“I have had to move because of re-development and I found it very traumatic. The warden was there for me sort all my bills and help me get settled.”

- Some said the service eased stress associated with managing a home, i.e. they did not have to worry about gardening and maintenance.

“I feel safe knowing the building is managed by staff. It takes the pressure off knowing someone else take responsibility. I can now get on the top of my finances with assistance. I enjoy the social activities.”

“Takes away the worry of the maintenance of my home. Being able to arrange for repairs etc. through the scheme manager. Feel part of a small community, takes away feeling of loneliness.”

“I have no bother with garden; they come and cut grass on a regular basis.”

“It means when I have no heating or hot water, or any repair this is dealt with and chased up. If there is no one to report it I could be sat for days in the cold. My health is looked after and she makes all my appointments as I cannot do this and everything is done on the phone.”

- Some said the service helped them overcome mobility problems and improved their independence as the staff organised provision of aids and adaptations.

“Always cheerful support worker. Maintains independence, helped get wet room and outside step to enable me to get out.”

“Installation of stair lift has improved my life enabling me to get out and about. Wet room has been excellent.”

- Some said they felt less socially isolated, with some mentioning social activities at their scheme and some talking about personal contact with staff or contact via Telecare.

“Has improved my health and wellbeing, reduced the chance of social isolation and given me peace of mind. It is reassuring knowing that help is at hand 24/7 when required.”

“Feeling of being more secure. Someone to seek advice from support from pull cord also a better quality of life due to meeting people like myself live on their own and can join in activities.”

“It has made my life a real pleasure. I no longer feel alone and isolated. Things get organised and we have quality of life here. We are no longer only seeing post men. We have a quality of life due to [name of staff member].”

“I don’t feel so alone and isolated with a support worker coming to see me every week or so, if possible I feel that I have practical support and emotional support too.”

“I have lived under sheltered accommodation since 1986 and have valued all the support and help over the years, when my late husband was very poorly and now when I am living alone. The wardens were always supportive, still are, and having central in case I need them was and is very reassuring. I don’t feel so alone.”

- Some said the service was comforting because there is someone who cares

“This service has made my mental health improve; I am not so anxious or depressed. I can function day to day, I can wake up and face another hard day knowing someone is looking out for my wellbeing.”

“Someone knows how I am, makes me feel cared for.”

- Some said the service improved their finances so they could manage better

“Helped save us from eviction and budget, claim benefits we didn't know we are entitled too.”

“Keep me out of debts by getting my benefits sorted.”

“Haven’t got the money worries I had and just knowing there’s someone there for you.”

“My support workers were instrumental in my receiving extra financial support when I suffered a very painful illness that lasted for five months and led to incapacity. They spent several hours filling the necessary forms and they always have my gratitude.”

- Some said they had better peace of mind because the alarm system offers reassurance to their families.

“Alarm system is important, our relatives feel safe knowing that they will be contacted straight away.”

“Reassurance and peace of mind for my family. I would get in a mess with my finances without it and would miss important appointments at hospital etc.”

- Some said they now had easier access to town and shopping.
- Some said the service had no impact on them. Some said they did not get a service.
- A few said the service has a negative impact, when staff did not help them to solve problems.
- There were some comments that people had already experienced a reduction in support with previous changes, resulting in more social isolation, nervousness and staff not being available as much as people wanted. Some people were unhappy about younger residents moving in, feeling they did not understand the needs of the elderly. Conversely, a younger disabled resident was experiencing bullying behaviour from elderly residents.

Other comments

- When asked if they had any other comments, 566 people responded. Many people expressed concern that the service would be cut and asked for no cuts to be made. Many said they were happy how the service was, with many saying they moved to sheltered housing specifically because of the peace of mind given by the staff and alarm system/pull cords/pendants. Many said they could not cope or would be lost without the support; they would be unsafe and would lose their independence. There was a view that any cuts would be picking on the most vulnerable and did not make sense when the population is ageing.

“Reduction of services will result in me becoming frail, sad, lonely, give up on life and dying. Nothing to live for.”

“It would be devastating to me to lose this service when getting older and helpless. Unable to cope without the service manager.”

“If this service were taken away my father would be far more vulnerable and likely need to move into residential care. My understanding is that our government is committed to enabling elderly people to continue to live in their own homes rather than resort to residential care. To remove support in this way is contrary to that policy.”

“I think it’s awful that this service is being taken away. Why do you always take services away from people who need them most?”

"Finding out this service is being cut has left me breathless and places like this are going to be isolated and more people left by themselves and in danger. This is supposed to be care in the community."

"The reduction or even ending this vital service will possibly put people's health or even lives in danger. It is as a lifeline, it keeps people independent and in the long term may well be a cheaper option than residential care. At a recent meeting to discuss the possible changes in the service that is supplied by Hampshire County Council a ninety three year old woman said I quote " sorry for being old". Personally as a younger under 55 resident suffering from a long term disability the service has changed my life and improved my health . I fear for my future and many of my neighbours."

"If I lose this service I may not be able to manage my own paperwork or finances. This service is a valuable one and should not be cut! Vulnerable people will suffer in the process. I do not want to be like the lady in Bournemouth who was lost for 6 years before they found her body! Please do not let this happen to us vulnerable old people in Hampshire."

"I feel secure knowing I have a pull cord if I be taken ill."

"This service is vital to us, gives us peace of mind, keep us safe."

"With all the proposed cuts I wonder whether we can still call it sheltered accommodation."

"I would feel lost and insecure if there was no scheme manager on site."

"If this service goes they take away my independence and quality of life. This service is so important."

"I am devastated to hear this service is being taken away. It is critical to my wellbeing. I am too disabled to get to the CAB etc. This home service is wonderful."

"Without the help I get I would still be living in a 1st floor flat isolated and possibly housebound."

"I find it unbelievable that this service could be discontinued. How many old, sick or disabled people will be placed at risk? Keeping one's independence is an important right. The service I have received has kept me out of a care home. I am sure this must be a cheaper option than full time residential care. There are many older people like myself who have the feeling that we are becoming a burden on society. Getting old is no joke it will happen to us all one day."

Other comments made by more than one person included:

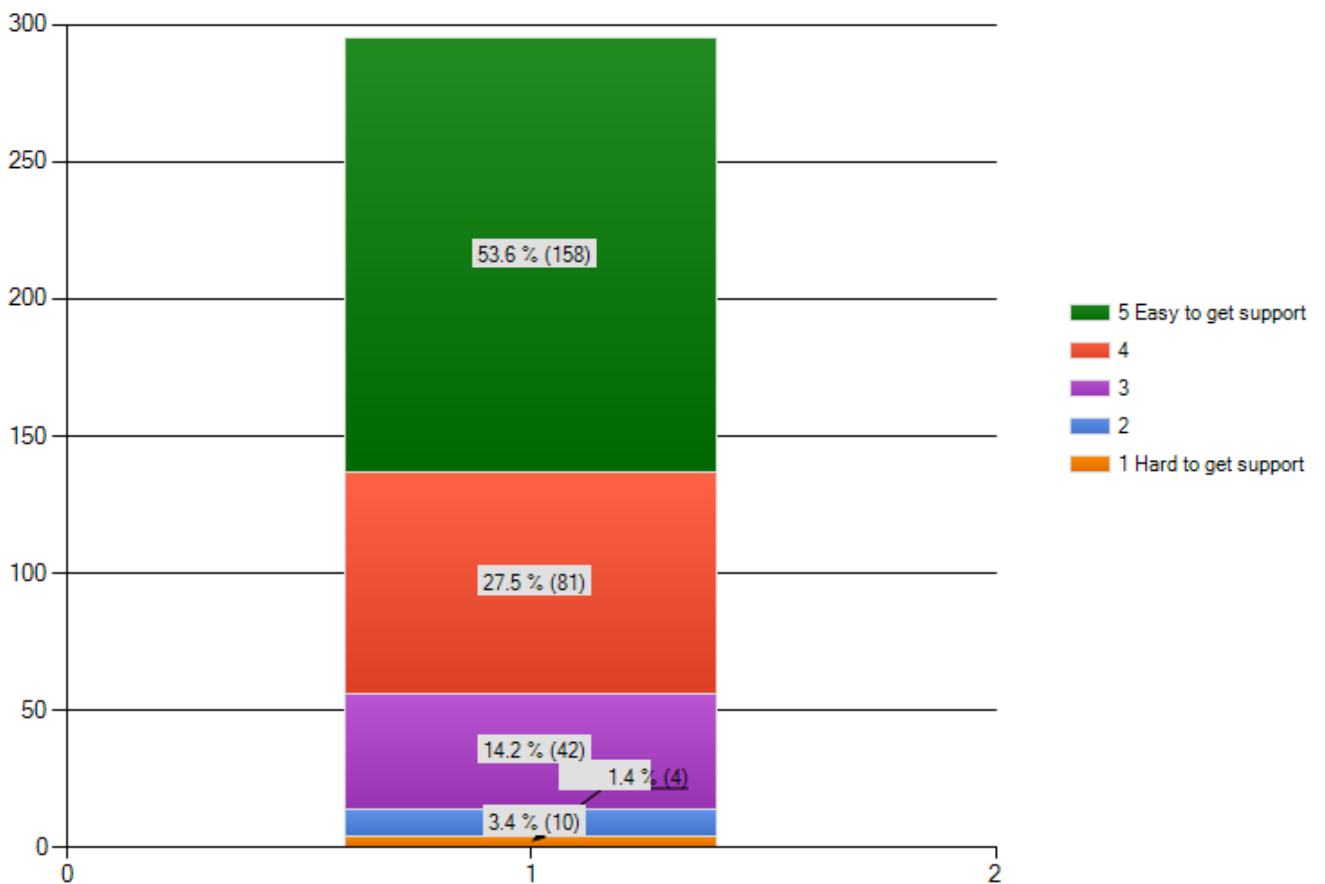
- The services are particularly essential for residents who have no family.
- Praise of caring staff, including support workers, carers, scheme managers and wardens.
- The view that there was already not enough staff and staff are stretched thin.
- Continued help is needed with correspondence and finances. Some praised staff for helping them to get out of debt.
- The handyman service is very good and needs to be kept.
- A few said there are some problems between residents that had not been sorted out. Some were not happy that younger residents and people with mental health problems had been introduced into their scheme.
- A few said it could be better to charge for services/charge more rather than to cut them.
- A few people said they did not use or get any services or said they did not need aspects of the service – e.g. the tannoy system, alarms or wardens. Some said they were unhappy paying for services they did not use.

Key messages from the Supporting People Short Term Services Strategic Review 2014 Service User Questionnaire

Ease of access

- Over half of all respondents (54%, 158 people) said it was easy to access the service. A small number found it hard to access the service.

How easy was it to access the service? Please choose the number that best describes your experience with 1 being the hardest and 5 being easiest.



- Floating support seemed to be the easiest service to access of the three, with 70% rating it as easy to access, compared with 48% for supported housing and 40% for hostels.

2. How easy was it to access the service? Please choose the number that best describes your experience with 1 being the hardest and 5 being easiest. [Create Chart](#) [Download](#)

	What type of support service do you currently use?			Response Totals
	Hostel	Supported Housing Project	Floating Support	
1 Hard to get support	1.4% (1)	2.5% (3)	0.0% (0)	
2	2.7% (2)	5.0% (6)	1.9% (2)	
3	20.5% (15)	17.6% (21)	5.8% (6)	
4	35.6% (26)	26.9% (32)	22.3% (23)	
5 Easy to get support	39.7% (29)	47.9% (57)	69.9% (72)	
rating average	4.10 (73)	4.13 (119)	4.60 (103)	4.28 (295)
answered question	73	119	103	295
skipped question				5

How well the service prepares people for living independently

- Looking at responses overall, over half of respondents (59%) said their service was preparing them for living independently very well. People receiving floating support more were more likely to consider their service as preparing them for independent living very well (76.5%), compared with people in hostels (49%) or supported housing projects (51%). A small number of people in hostels and supported housing projects said their service was preparing them for independence badly. One of the people in a hostel said

they had been in the hostel for six months and no one had been moved onto proper housing.

3. How well is this service preparing you to live independently? Please choose the number that best describes your experience with 1 indicating that the service is not preparing you well and 5 indicating that the service is preparing you for independent living very well. [Create Chart](#) [Download](#)

		What type of support service do you currently use?			Response
		Hostel	Supported Housing Project	Floating Support	Totals
1 Badly		4.1% (3)	3.4% (4)	0.0% (0)	
2		6.8% (5)	1.7% (2)	1.0% (1)	
3		12.2% (9)	17.1% (20)	2.0% (2)	
4		28.4% (21)	26.5% (31)	20.4% (20)	
5 Very well		48.6% (36)	51.3% (60)	76.5% (75)	
rating average		4.11 (74)	4.21 (117)	4.72 (98)	4.36 (289)
answered question		74	117	98	289
skipped question					11

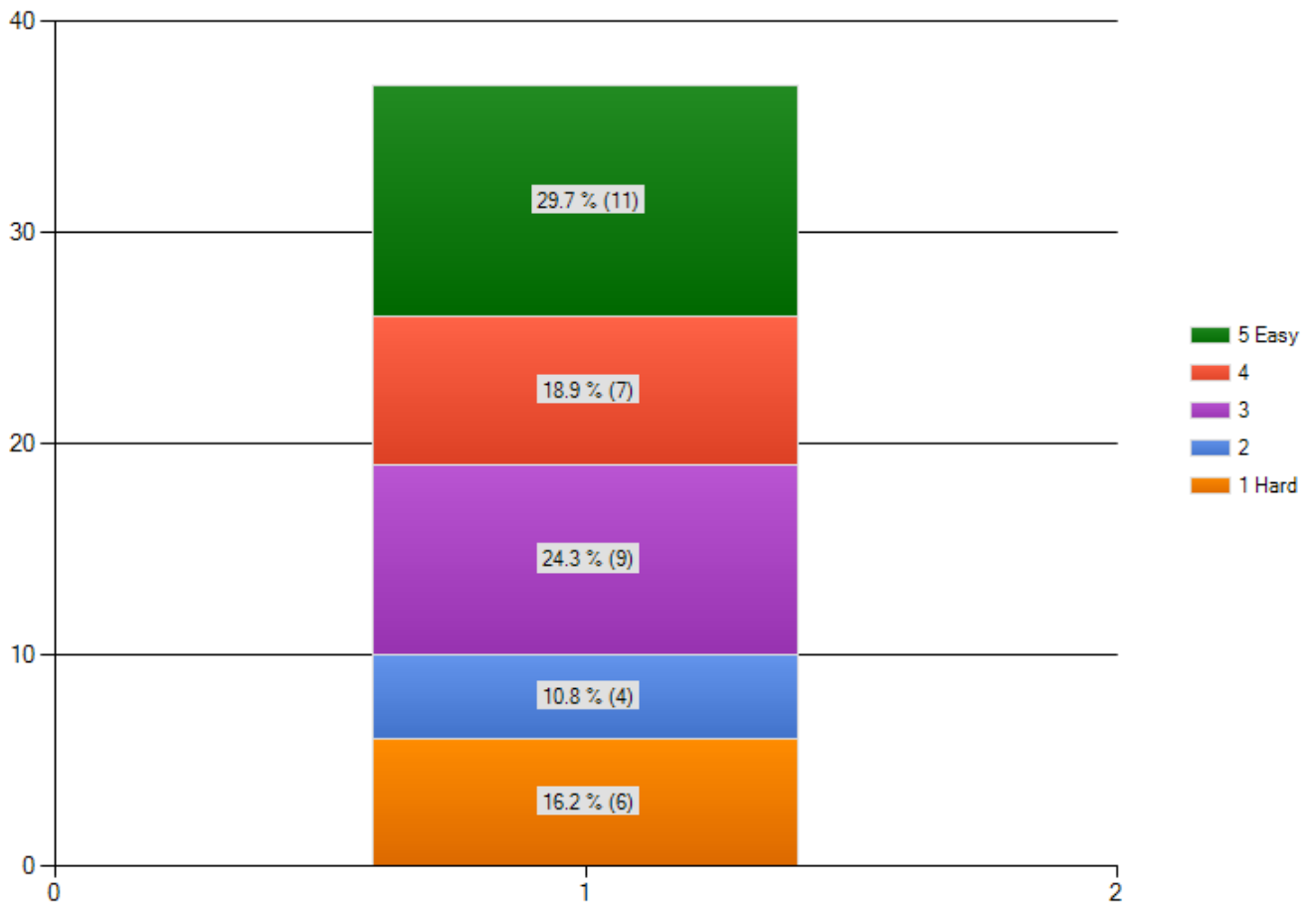
Seeing a support worker

- 37 respondents said they did not see their support worker enough. This included five people in hostels, 22 in supported housing and 10 who receive floating support. How often is not enough? 29 of the 37 saw their support worker for one hour a week. Some saw their support worker for as little as 10 minutes, or once a month and other saw them up to six hours per week.
- Only four people said they saw their support worker too much. How often is 'too much'? Two were in hostels and two were in supported housing projects. Two saw their support worker for one hour per week, one saw them six hours per week and one saw them "all the time".

Changing support providers

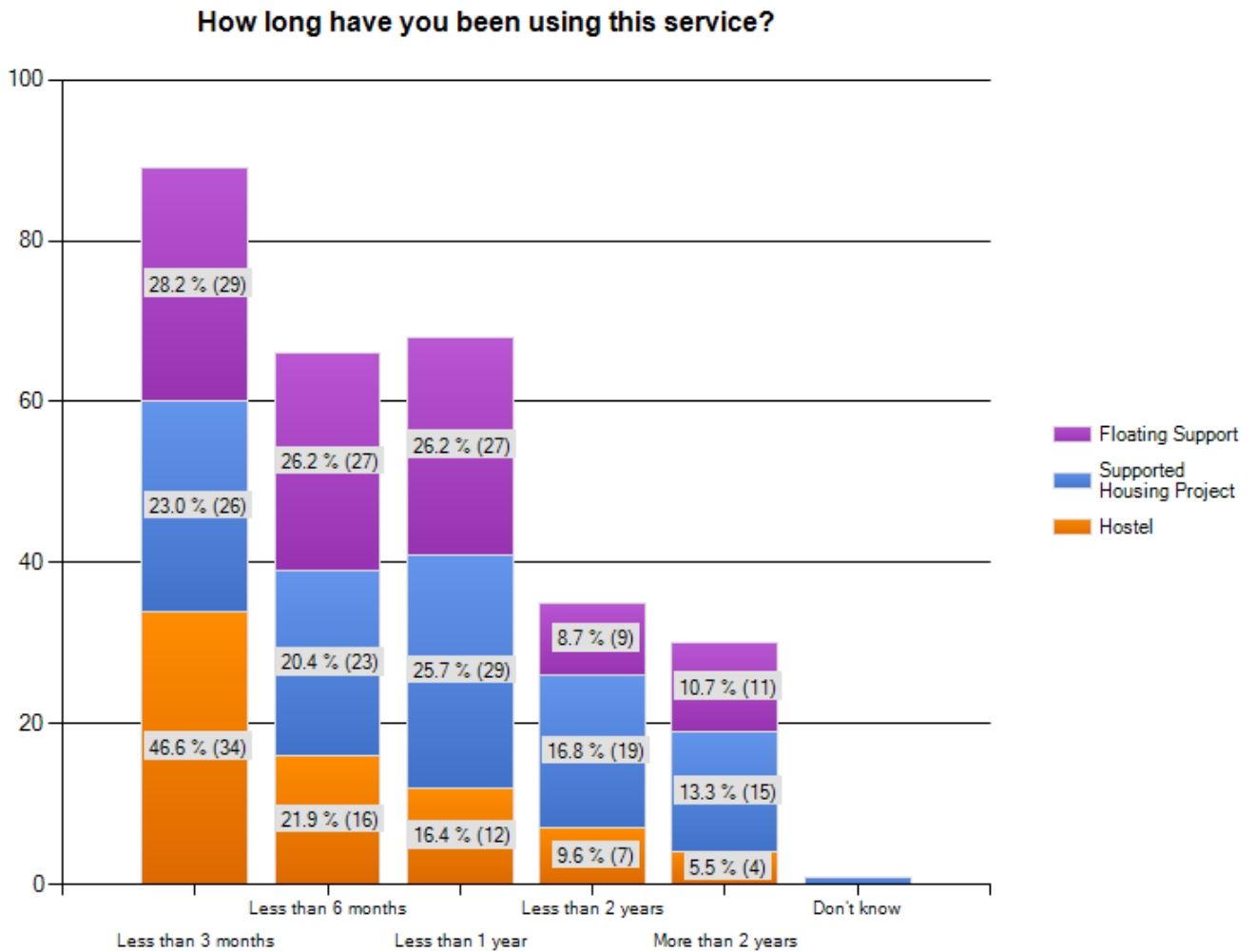
- 12.5% (36) people had changed support providers. 30% of them (11 people) said it was easy and 16% (six people, four of whom were supported housing users) said it was hard.

Please choose the number that best describes your experience of changing support providers, with 1 being the hardest and 5 being easiest.



How long people have been using the service

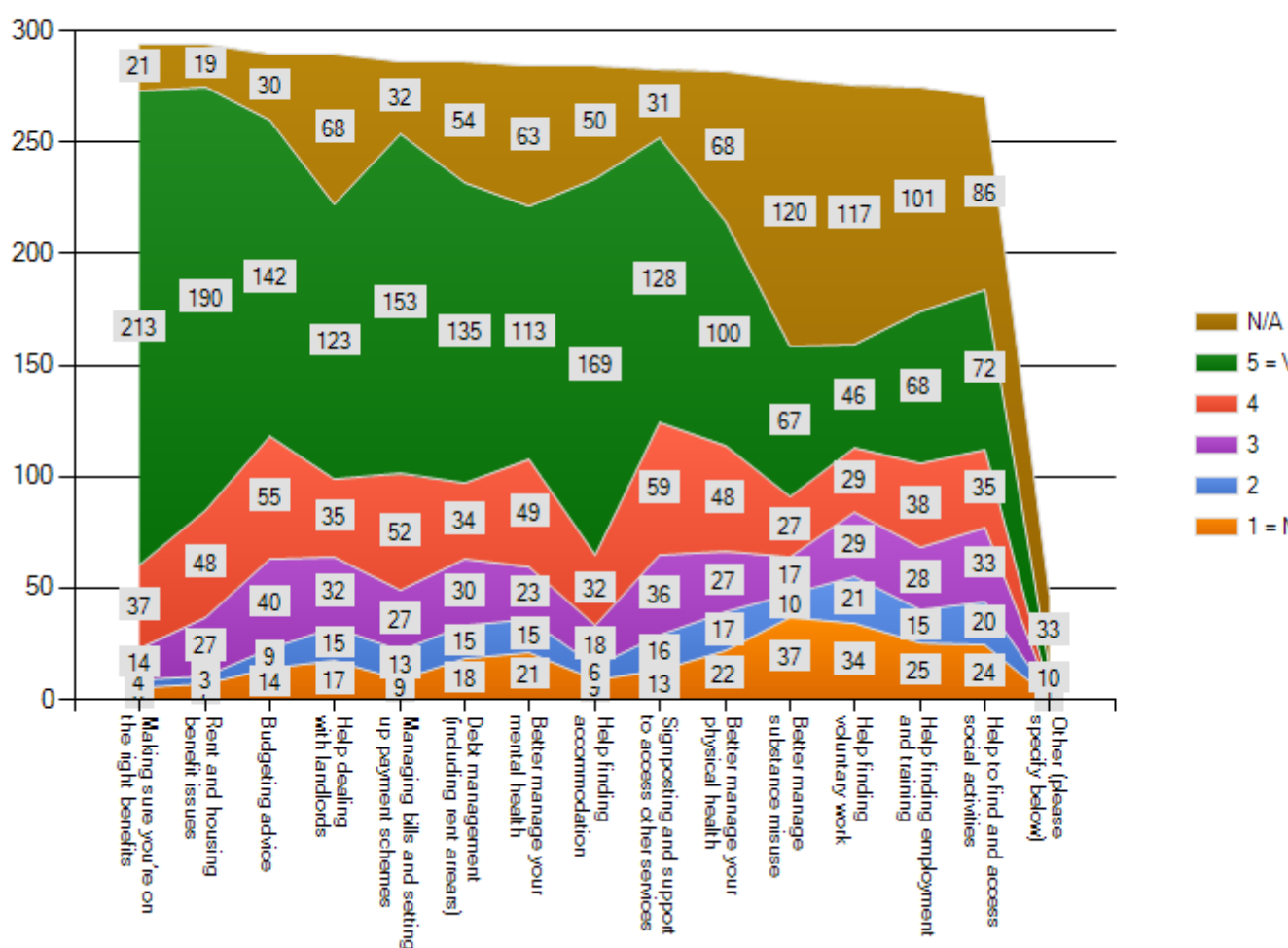
- The length of time people had been using their service varied a great deal. The most common length of time was under three months (31%, 89 people). 10% (30 people) had been using their service for more than 2 years. This included four people in hostels, 15 in supported housing and 11 receiving floating support.



The importance of different aspects of the service

- Overall, the services most commonly marked as 'vital' by respondents were 'Making sure you are on the right benefits'(72% of respondents), 'Rent and housing benefit issues'(65%), 'Help finding accommodation'(60%), 'Managing bills and setting up payment schemes' (54%) and 'Budgeting advice' (49%). 'Help finding voluntary work' was the service most often marked as not needed (42% of respondents) but it should be noted that for 17% it was 'vital'.

The service you are using offers a range of personalised support. Please give each type of support a score out of 5 to show how important this is to you. If you do not need the support listed please circle N/A.



- 'Help to find and access social activities' was more commonly seen as vital by people in hostels (33%) and supported housing projects (29%) than those receiving floating support (19%).

- ‘Help finding voluntary work’ was marked as vital by over a fifth of those in hostels and supported housing but only 7% of those receiving floating support.
- Around 30% of those in hostels and supported housing said ‘Help finding employment and training’ was vital, whereas only 14% of people in floating support did so.
- 49% of people in hostels said help to ‘Better manage substance misuse’ was vital, compared to 22% in supported housing and 9% receiving floating support.

What is good about the support the service has given

- Asked what is good about the support the service has given, 262 people responded. One of the most common answers from users across all services was ‘the staff’. People praised staff for being friendly, supportive, helpful, ‘always there for you’, understanding, honest, flexible and easy to contact. They appreciated the help staff gave them to sort out problems.
 - Many people in hostels spoke about the friendliness and helpfulness of staff. People appreciated having staff to talk to when needed 24/7. Some said staff were non-judgemental, fair or caring. Some said they appreciated help they received from staff with post and paperwork, benefits and help to access other services.

“Very supportive, we would have nowhere else to go if it was not for this family hostel. My support worker is extremely fair and easy to talk to. I feel completely confident in her professionally and trust her judgement which I do not in other professional. She is very supportive and I cannot fault the service she has provided me and my family. Thank you!!”

“Staff have time and patience to help with everybody’s problems.”

“My keyworker and the rest of staff are firm but fair and I appreciate all the guidance.”

“I always feel you can go and speak to someone when you want, and always help when they can. They always ask how I am, I feel they care about my wellbeing.”

- People receiving floating support said staff were friendly, non judgemental and reliable. People said staff were easy to contact and they felt they could talk honestly to their support workers. They appreciated staff giving them information, advice, signposting and practical assistance with sorting out problems.

“My key worker is always available to support me and will help me do the things I need to do and know to manage my debt. I was supported to find a home cheaper which I can now afford. I am happier now and not as stressed.”

“Everyone is helpful. No one judges you. Has given me confidence. I can see my support worker at different drop-ins.”

“Got help with a solicitor when I was getting a divorce. I would not have understood what she was saying. My support worker explained everything to me and I could not have done it without her. She has given me the confidence to deal with people on the phone and with the benefits people. She explained what I had to do.”

- People in supported housing projects spoke about staff being helpful and giving them motivation. They appreciated staff being there when needed and said staff were friendly and knowledgeable.

“The support from the staff that I have received along with the accommodation has been so important in me stopping offending and being used to being part of the community again.”

“The support and help staff give is very good. They motivate us to do things when I am feeling down and I have been provided nice accommodation.”

Other things people commonly said were good about the current service include:

- Someone/housing being there for you when you are desperate.

“Helped me when I was desperate and living on the street.”

“Someone there when I need them.”

- Giving people in need a roof over their head, food, a bed and safety. Some said they would be homeless and on the streets without the service. Some also said it was helping them find suitable permanent accommodation

“It provided me with a roof over my head at a time when I most needed it allowing me to get a job and now gives me a breather enabling me to look for the right kind or permanent accommodation, whilst at the same time providing me with friendly faces and someone to talk to when I return from work.”

“Get a lot of help - bed and food. If it was not for the night shelter I’d still be living on the streets.”

“If I did not have this help over the past 2.5 years I would have been homeless and still alcohol dependent.”

- Help with money and legal issues: managing and maximising benefits, helping with post, helping with budgeting, dealing with bills and debt, supporting people through court, etc.

“I feel that the team provide a good caring and understandable support package. Benefits are a confusing issue to many yet the team allocate a member who is very benefit issue savvy and very helpful to get the correct benefits sorted.”

“I was seriously ill and not claiming any benefits or opening my post before CMHT referred me to the service. This service has made such a difference to my life.”

“In my previous accommodation I felt very unsupported. Within just a few days of moving to the service my benefits were sorted and I was given access to other services and given help to get on an Open University course. I am now ready to move onto my own accommodation and live independently.”

In addition,

- Some people in hostels and some receiving floating support said ‘everything’ about the service was good.
- It was clear that the service had had a big impact on the quality of many people’s life and wellbeing. Many said the support they had received had changed their lives for the better or saved them. Some said the support they received had made them more confident, improved their mental health, more secure, less anxious or ‘a better person’. Many said that the service was helping them towards independence or to get back into society.

“Helped me to sort out all my problems. They have been a life saver and I would have gone hungry.”

“If I had not come into the night shelter then I would be in a grave. I felt safe in there and I had a lot of support.”

“It has changed my life - I have changed so much. I now feel valued and comfortable. I was ashamed of myself - not any more.”

“Being here has calmed me down and helped with my PTSD. I think this has been really good for me and my mental health.”

“There is always someone there to help in getting my life back on track. I wouldn't have been able to get through without them.”

“Fantastic service, friendly and kind support workers. This took away my stress and anxiety.”

“Gave the help I needed. Felt really trapped at the time – [name] there when I most needed her. Sort of saved me.”

“The service you have provided has given me the opportunity to expand my mental health to able me to productively move on and actively seek a healthy life style.”

“I still have a long way to go but I would not be here today if I hadn't heard of [service name] to go to where I feel safe and to sort out my life.”

“Helps me to deal with life on my own, helps with my mental state and manage things.”

“Got me stable, never been like that before, a place to call home.”

- Some receiving floating support said they liked that support workers came to their home.
- Some said they liked that the service was affordable
- Some said their accommodation was nice.
- Three said they did not think their service was good, one of whom said they were not being supported around housing.

Improvements to the service

- Asked how the service could be improved, 174 people responded. Around a quarter of them said there were no improvements to make, the service is fine or excellent as it is and should be retained as it is. A few answered ‘don't know’. Specific improvements suggested for hostels by more than one person were:
 - Being able to move on more easily/quicker. Quicker turnaround of rooms so more people can access the service. More support with moving on. This was the most common type of suggestion.
 - More one-to-one help/more hours with staff or more support workers.
 - More checks in rooms per week.
 - More social activities.
 - Better food or cooking your own food.

- Faster help/fix with issues.

Specific improvements suggested for supported housing projects by more than one person were:

- More staff so they can help more. Longer staffing hours. Being able to see support staff more often/longer. This was the most common type of suggestion.
- Support at weekends/ 24hr telephone support.
- Dry houses – people said it is difficult to live in shared accommodation with people who are still drinking.
- Provide Internet/better IT services - it is needed for job searching.
- More communication between departments/head office.
- Better /more communication between residents and support workers (e.g. more regular).
- More help with moving on and getting employment.
- More cameras/ better security e.g. locks for abused women; security guards when staff are not there.
- Everyone should keep the place clean/ need more hoovers.

Specific improvements suggested for floating support by more than one person were:

- More staff so they could spend more time helping people more/help more people. This was one of the two most common answers. More funding for more staff/ better pay/expand the service.
- Make more people aware of the service/advertise. This was also one of the two most common answers.
- Provide the support for longer than two years.
- Bigger rooms.
- More drop-ins.

Other comments

- Asked if they had any other comments, 97 people answered. The great majority wrote in praise of the service they were receiving, with many saying the service is vital, has made a huge difference to them and should not be cut. Many said they did not want to lose a specific member of staff or team.

“Without the support I do not know where I would be. I know my child would be in care if I did not have support. My support worker has helped me so much. She even had my arrears reduced.”

“I have a profound respect and gratitude for the staff and all who have made this service available for it is no exaggeration to state that living here saved my life and allowed me to contemplate and lead a new way of life.”

“I am very pleased with the help I have received from this service and I am eternally grateful as I believe without this help I most probably wouldn't be here to write this message.”

“Staff are incredibly experienced with my mental health problems and provide invaluable support. I felt that I had no-one in the years previous to getting this support.”

“My support worker is brilliant, I don't know what I would have done without her and this service. In five months I have managed to sort out massive debt. Please do not cut this service as it is vital for people like me!”

“Supported housing has helped me at a time when no one else could. I couldn't cope if I was in my own flat alone even with floating support as they don't have time and remit to help me emotionally.”

“I find it sad that all the hard work done by staff with us is being withdrawn. I hope you consider supported housing and don't make massive cuts as I worry about people just coming into the situation I have been in, supported housing is vital for vulnerable people like me, its invaluable and really helped me. Shame it is being cut short.”

“Without these places their world would be a lot of people in trouble one way or another. So please do not change or stop these hubs because they are making a big difference ok.”

“Don't change my keyworker ever.”

Many of the other comments were about specific issues they have with their service, such as things lacking in their accommodation. Issues mentioned by more than one person included:

- The rules of the house should be enforced more/tackle problem behaviour in hostels.
- More help is needed to move on from supported housing.
- Better advertising of the floating support service is needed, e.g. at GPs.

Conclusion

In summary:

- People said Older Persons Services should not be cut. They said that the staff and pull cords/pendants/alarm system make them feel safe and secure at home and give them peace of mind. They considered them as vital. They valued the practical and emotional support given by wardens, support workers and scheme managers and wanted more contact with wardens/scheme managers, ILOs, or support workers - preferably face-to-face contact. The service - both staff and pull cords/pendants/alarm system has given people confidence, improved their mental and physical wellbeing, prevented social isolation and enabled people to stay in their own homes, preventing the need for residential care. Many felt that they would not be able to cope, would be at risk and could not live independently without the service.
- People said Short Term Services need to be retained, have given people a roof over their head, got their life back on track, improved their mental health and helped them towards independence and back into society. In many instances people said the service had saved their life. They said help with money, including support around benefits and debts, help with accommodation and help with substance misuse was vital. People particularly valued the staff in services for their friendliness, understanding, helpfulness, problem solving and being there for you'. People wanted more staff so that more hours of support could be provided and more support to move on quicker to more permanent accommodation and employment.