

Supporting People

Identifying Housing Support Service Costs and the amount of Pooled Rent Income financing Housing Support Services

Interim Guidance for Local Authority
and other landlords (RSLs)

December 2001



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1. Introduction

1.1 Purpose of the Guidance

1.1.1 This Guidance focuses on what local authority, Registered Social Landlords and other landlords need to do between now and April 2003 in order to ensure that housing support service costs are funded after April 2003, and that local Supporting People budgets are sufficient to meet these costs. It has been produced by the Scottish Executive to enable local authority, RSL and other landlords to prepare properly for the introduction of the Supporting People programme in 2003. This will be achieved by making changes to their accounting and rent or service charge structures. While the requirements of the guidance, in respect of returns to the Scottish Executive or Communities Scotland, apply only to landlords who practice rent-pooling, much of the content is also relevant to other landlords setting service charges for housing support under the Transitional Housing Benefit Scheme, in terms of disaggregating those service charges from rent.

1.1.2 Landlords are expected to start implementing this Guidance straight away, so that they are able to identify housing support service costs and the amount of pooled rent income financing those support services retrospectively from 1 April 2001.

1.2 Imperatives for Change

Local Authorities

1.2.1 The Scottish Executive is aware that many local authorities do not currently maintain clearly identifiable expenditure accounts for housing support. Nor do all landlords separately identify the charges for these services in their statements of rent or service charges due from tenants. Much of this expenditure and income is pooled within the Housing Revenue Account and as such is “invisible” to the Transitional Housing Benefit Scheme now in operation. Nevertheless, from April 2003 Housing Benefit will no longer be payable for housing support services, and providers will be expected to finance these services from other sources, including the new Supporting People grant. At the same time, measures in the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 will come into force, meaning that local authorities will no longer account for expenditure on housing support services in their Housing Revenue Accounts.

Other Landlords

1.2.2 All non local authority landlords who operate “pooled” rent structures or who have inherited them through stock transfer are in a similar position. Thus they will need to separate their charges in line with the proposals for local authorities as set out in paragraph 1.2.1 above. Landlords should note that returns to Communities Scotland are required only where housing support services are funded through rent-pooling. However, all service providers will need to separately identify their housing support service charges and provide that information to the local authority, in preparation for Supporting People.

1.3 Content of the Guidance

1.3.1 **Part 2** of the Guidance outlines the key elements of change embodied in the introduction of the Supporting People programme. **Part 3** sets out the issues for rent pooling landlords and the principles which the Scottish Executive wish to apply in making the transition as straightforward as possible for such landlords and their tenants. **Part 4** sets the timetable for rent pooling landlords to prepare for Supporting People. **Part 5** provides detailed guidance on the principles to be applied in identifying the costs of housing support services. **Part 6** summarises other preparatory work which rent pooling landlords and other providers of housing support services will need to take forward.

1.4 Action required by this Guidance

1.4.1 The primary action specific to rent pooling landlords required by this Guidance is set out in Part 4. In summary, rent pooling landlords are expected to:

- separately identify expenditure on those housing support services for the financial year 2001-02, and in particular the amount financed from the rent pool; and
- provide, from September 2001 onwards, a series of increasingly firm estimates and returns in respect of housing support expenditure financed from the rent pool in 2001-02, culminating in the submission of actual expenditure data in September 2002 and a certified expenditure return for 2001-02 by January 2003. Estimates of expenditure in 2002-03 and 2003-04 are also requested.

1.5 Further information

1.5.1 Further information about the Supporting People programme is available on the Scottish Executive Supporting People website
<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/housing/supportingpeople>

All guidance and consultation papers produced to date on the principles and operation of the new framework can be found there, together with minutes of Stakeholders' Group meetings, Frequently Asked Questions and contact points.

1.5.2 Additional copies of this guidance are available from Jean Waddie, Scottish Executive Development Department, Housing 3-2, Area 1-G, Victoria Quay, EDINBURGH EH6 6QQ. Tel: 0131 244 5525, Email: Jean.Waddie@scotland.gsi.gov.uk

2. Supporting People: The Key Elements of Change

2.1 Principles and objectives of the Supporting People programme

2.1.1 The Supporting People programme will provide housing support services to a wide range of vulnerable people. Supported housing services have grown up over a number of years, in response to a diverse range of needs. Too often, however, the services have been:

- driven by the availability of capital and revenue funds, not by analysis of local needs;
- linked to outdated provision models which may no longer meets clients' needs; and
- not directly linked to local authority priorities and strategies.

2.1.2 This haphazard growth has nevertheless produced a valuable supply of supported housing that provides much-needed assistance to vulnerable people. The Scottish Executive recognises the value of this contribution and wishes to put its funding and development on a more secure and co-ordinated basis. The aim of the Supporting People programme is therefore to improve the quality and effectiveness of these support services by:

- **focusing provision on local need:** introducing a more systematic and strategic process to assess needs and supply of housing support services in local areas and make provision accordingly;
- **improving the range and quality of services:** promoting the development of a wider range of support services more geared to the needs of the people receiving support, and based on informed good practice. In particular the link of housing support services to tenure will be broken, so that more flexible support may be introduced where appropriate;
- **integrating housing support with wider local strategies:** particularly within local authority social work and housing departments and, where appropriate, the Health Service (for example hospital reprovisioning programmes);
- **monitoring quality and effectiveness:** in a more structured way, including integration with the Best Value regime and the regulation and inspection of support services. This should lead to improvements in the standard of housing support. The National Care Standards Committee is developing standards for care and support to be used by the Scottish Commission on the Regulation of Care, established through the Regulation of Care (Scotland) Act 2001;
- **introducing effective decision making and administration:** changing the arrangements for funding and managing the sector to allow transparent decision making and cost effective administration.

2.2 The role of local authority housing services in delivering housing support services

Where the commissioning and purchasing body identifies that the local authority offers the best option for delivering the service, the authority will continue to undertake the role of delivering housing support services to their tenants after April 2003 (funded from Supporting People or local authorities' other budgets). In providing housing support services more widely to individuals living in other tenures, the commissioning and purchasing body may consider that Best Value would be achieved by the local authority also delivering these services, and local authorities will be free to do this, using Supporting People or other budgets.

2.3 Operation of the Supporting People programme

2.3.1 The full range of provisions and policies of the Supporting People programme has been set out previously by the Scottish Executive in consultation papers and guidance. The summary below is intended to set the context, following which the implications of the regime for rent pooling landlords will be discussed in Part 3.

Housing Benefit

2.3.2 From April 2003 Housing Benefit will not be payable in respect of charges made by landlords for housing support services to vulnerable tenants. A Transitional Housing Benefit Scheme (THBS) became effective from April 2000, and is intended to identify housing support services currently funded through Housing Benefit and quantify their costs. However, where landlords are meeting housing support costs from their rent pool they will not have made full charges to tenants for support, and support service charges will not be identified (except, in some cases, within the landlord authority's own accounts).

Landlord charges to tenants after April 2003

2.3.3 When THBS ceases to be payable in April 2003, landlords will continue to make the appropriate rent charges to tenants, net of any housing support service costs.

Supporting People payments to landlords

2.3.4 Supporting People grant payments will replace not only THBS but also Communities Scotland's Special Needs Allowance Package (SNAP) and Resettlement Grant, the support element of income-related Job Seekers Allowance and Income Support, and relevant elements of Rough Sleepers Initiative funding. Supporting People funds will be held by local authorities. All landlords and other providers of housing support services funded through the programmes that will be integrated into the new Supporting People grant (service providers) are expected to identify their housing support service costs to the local authority's Supporting People commissioning and purchasing team prior to 2003. For the sake of continuity of services to vulnerable people, local authorities will be expected to continue funding these services until the Supporting People commissioning and purchasing team can review them. An agreement will be put in place between the local authority and the service provider, and will form the basis for specifying and funding the service.

Local Supporting People strategies

2.3.5 In order to lay the foundations for service reviews and future spending priorities, local authorities are expected, during 2001 and 2002, to map existing providers and provision and then analyse local needs for housing support services. They are expected to consult widely on a Supporting People strategy based on these analyses and on stakeholders' and service users' views about longer-term service development.

Reviews of services after 2003

2.3.6 Within three years of April 2003 each commissioning and purchasing team will undertake a scheme by scheme review of each of the services it is funding, within the context of its Supporting People strategy, taking account of the value for money and quality of the service or scheme.

Charges to tenants / service users after April 2003

2.3.7 The general intention is that local authorities will make arrangements to charge certain users of the housing support services commissioned (Supporting People charges). Liability for charges may be assessed by means-testing, though this is subject to further Scottish Executive policy consideration.

2.4 Overall timetable of preparatory activity

2.4.1 The Scottish Executive has published a wall chart summary of the implementation timetable for Supporting People, accompanying the paper *Decision-Making Processes and Working Arrangements: Implementation 2000-2003*. In essence:

- in 2001-02, local authorities will:
 - set up consultative and strategic fora;
 - lay the foundations for their Supporting People strategies by mapping needs and identifying Supporting People service providers.

- in 2002-03, local authorities will:
 - complete their strategy documents;
 - advise providers of their indicative budgets for Supporting People funds and enter into forms of agreement with them;
 - develop other features such as mechanisms for charging, scheme review and the other arrangements as set out in the paper *Decision-Making Processes and Working Arrangements*.

3. Issues for Rent Pooling Landlords

3.1 Definition of rent pooling

3.1.1 “Rent pooling” refers to the practice by which the costs of providing additional services (in this case housing support services) to selected tenants are not charged directly to those tenants receiving the services, but are shared by all tenants of that landlord, or in that rent pooling scheme, in the form of a small increase to the rent charge. Landlords should note that the provisions of this guidance refer only to services funded in this way by rental income, and do not include those funded by top-slicing from the HRA or other pooled revenue accounts.

3.2 Disaggregation of the “rent pool”

3.2.1 The Scottish Executive wishes to see all rent pooling landlords identify the costs of their housing support services. This will benefit them by:

- establishing greater consistency and comparability among service providers within the Supporting People regime; and
- ensuring sufficient Supporting People funds are in place to meet these costs at the outset of the Supporting People regime. This minimises the risk of additional costs being identified and excluded from the HRA or disallowed for Housing Benefit at a later date, when additional Supporting People funds may not be available to cover these costs.

3.2.2 For local authorities who are rent pooling landlords, pooled housing support service costs, as well as costs already separately identified and subject to the THBS, will be excluded from the HRA from April 2003. Guidance is provided in Part 5 on how housing support services are defined and how costs should be allocated in the context of the HRA or other landlord (RSL) pooled revenue accounts.

3.3 Provisions in local budgets for Supporting People funds

3.3.1 When the level of expenditure on housing support services from local authority and other landlord pooled rent income is identified and separated out through the application of this Guidance, the Scottish Executive will make additional provision in the new Supporting People grant equal to the full certified value of that expenditure (the gross cost of these services). This will be over and above provision for landlords’ expenditure on support services identified through the THBS. It will not include landlords’ expenditure on support services financed by other resources, such as local authority funds, specific grants or contributions from other organisations. Such resources will continue to operate alongside the new Supporting People grant without being brought into it.

3.4 Use of resources

3.4.1 Rent pooling local authority landlords are not expected to reduce their basic rent levels from April 2003 to reflect the exclusion of pooled costs of housing support services from the HRA. Instead, when the housing support costs identified by local authority and other rent pooling landlords are met by the new Supporting People grant from April 2003, this will free up resources in these landlords' rent pools. The Scottish Executive is determined to ensure that these resources are used effectively to address key housing policy priorities, and will issue further guidance on the specific priorities to which these resources should be applied. In order to secure the element of Supporting People grant equivalent to the costs of the support services currently funded by rent pooling, local authorities will need to submit to the Scottish Executive an acceptable plan for how they will apply these resources.

3.5 Making charges for housing support services prior to April 2003

3.5.1 Prior to April 2003, all housing support costs which are not pooled across general rents should be identified and claimed under the THBS. Where this has not yet happened, landlords should take steps now to ensure that such charges are identified by the THBS.

3.5.2 It is not necessary for rent pooling landlords to increase the overall level of rent and service charge to tenants receiving housing support services, where they have not done so already. Rent pooling landlords already in the process of introducing additional charges to cover housing support costs currently met from their wider rent pool should "freeze" this process at 2001-02 levels in real terms.

3.6 Charges for housing support services after April 2003

3.6.1 The Scottish Executive does not intend that existing tenants of rent pooling landlords, who may be eligible to pay for housing support services from their own resources, should initially in April 2003 become liable for these charges in addition to rent and service charges which they already pay. Instead, the Scottish Executive will require local authorities to rebate any additional Supporting People charges which become due at April 2003 to tenants who are in occupation and receiving housing support services immediately prior to April 2003. These tenants will be referred to as transitional tenants. The rebate will cover any support cost which they have not previously paid as a consequence of it being pooled and which is not otherwise covered by means tested rebates under the Supporting People charging system. (Details of the charging system will be the subject of future consultation.) The Scottish Executive will compensate local authorities for the costs of the transitional tenants' rebate.

3.6.2 Transitional tenants' rebate will apply only to tenants who have been in occupation and receiving housing support services for at least one month prior to the commencement of Supporting People in April 2003. The rebate will cover the part of the cost of their support previously met from the rent pool. Tenants who receive housing support for the first time after 1 March 2003 will not qualify for rebate unless there are special circumstances arising, when the landlord may at its discretion grant a rebate. Examples of special circumstances would include tenants who applied and were accepted to receive support services before 1 March 2003 but were unable to take up the service until after that date, or those who succeed to the tenancy of a sheltered property. In all cases the test will be one of natural justice and fairness. The Scottish Executive anticipates that rent pooling landlords will be able to

provide full information in advance about their Supporting People charge liabilities to all prospective recipients of housing support commencing on or after 1 March 2003 on which Supporting People charges will be payable.

3.6.3 Transitional tenants' rebate will be tapered over a three year period, covering 100% of the eligible costs in the first year, 66% in 2004-2005, 34% in 2005-2006, and will be discontinued from April 2006. The protection will cover the continuing costs of the same level of service which the tenant received prior to 1 March 2003, including increases in the costs of that service for inflation etc. If the tenant requires additional services, they will be liable for the full costs of the additional element, less any means-tested rebates. An individual will continue to receive transitional tenants' rebate even if they move accommodation. Cross-authority provisions will apply if they move to another local authority area. In the event of extended absence by the tenant, the local authority should discuss the situation with the support provider in order to determine whether funding, and therefore rebate, should continue. Both the support provider and the tenant will be able to appeal this decision.

3.6.4 A worked example of Transitional Tenants' rebate is provided at Annex 1.

3.7 Funding arrangements for RSLs

3.7.1 RSLs which fund housing support services through rent pooling are required to provide information on the level of expenditure to Communities Scotland, using the form in Appendix 1. Communities Scotland will thereafter inform local authorities of the amount of pooled rent income financing housing support services in their area. To ensure continuity of service, local authorities are expected to continue funding these services until the Commissioning and Purchasing Team can review them. This will free up resources in the RSL's rent pool. Communities Scotland will advise RSLs how these resources should be applied, after discussion with the local authority and taking into account both the priorities identified by the Scottish Executive for use of local authorities' rent pool resources and the Local Housing Strategy.

3.7.2 Charging for housing support services under Supporting People will be the responsibility of the local authority, and RSLs will not therefore be involved in administering transitional tenants' rebate. They will, however, need to supply information on the services provided to tenants and the charges for which they were liable prior to 1 March 2003.

4. Preparing for Supporting People funding

4.1.1 By the end of 2002 local authorities will be advised by the Scottish Executive of indicative budgets for their areas for the financial year 2003-04, in order to enable them to enter into forms of agreement with service providers in advance of the first year of operation of the Supporting People programme. Since the costs of housing support services provided by rent pooling landlords are not discernible through the THBS or other funding streams contributing to the budgets for Supporting People funds, the Scottish Executive requires these landlords to provide separate information on their expenditure.

4.1.2 Rent pooling local authority landlords are asked to:

- separately identify and account for their housing support service expenditure for the financial year 2001-02, and in particular identify the part of this expenditure financed from their rent pool;
- provide an initial estimate in September 2001 of the amounts they expect to spend from their rent pool in the course of the 2001-02 financial year to fund housing support service costs, and related information as set out in Appendix 1;
- provide updated estimates for 2001-02 expenditure and updated related information by March 2002;
- provide an accurate return for 2001-02 expenditure and updated related information by September 2002;
- provide an estimate of expenditure for 2002-2003 by September 2002;
- provide a return certified by the Director of Finance for 2001-02 expenditure and updated related information by January 2003;
- Provide budget estimates for services formerly funded from the rent pool for 2003-2004 by January 2003.

Other landlords (RSLs) will need to provide similar returns for 2001-02 to Communities Scotland. Communities Scotland will inform them in due course of the arrangements for making these returns.

4.1.3 Rent pooling landlords will need to submit these returns in order to ensure that the local authority's Supporting People grant covers the cost of housing support services for their tenants currently met from their rent pool. This will be an element in the calculation of Supporting People grants.

5. Identifying Housing Support Costs

5.1 Problems with existing definitions of housing support activities

5.1.1 Several definitions of housing support services are available, but these are insufficient in themselves to enable landlords to identify support costs with confidence. In Appendix II, Schedule 1 these definitions - from the Supporting People Consultation Document, DSS Circular HB/CTB A47/1999, as supplemented by HB/CTB A10/2001, and Communities Scotland' Special Needs Allowance Package (SNAP 6) form - are summarised. However, some of the activities that can form part of a housing support service can, in certain circumstances, be part of the landlord function and accounted for within the HRA or other landlord revenue accounts (for example "advice"). In addition, the existing definitions have been created for different purposes and as such none of them quite meets the particular needs of rent pooling landlords in identifying their pooled housing support costs. For these reasons, the Scottish Executive wishes to provide guidance for rent pooling landlords on the disaggregation of their costs for support services and, in the case of local authorities, the exclusion of these costs from their HRA.

5.1.2 Although the guidance which follows is intended to clarify the position, there will continue to be areas in which landlords must use their judgement in determining:

- whether an activity is part of general housing management covering all tenants, some of whom may be more vulnerable than others, and thus should continue to be accounted for in the HRA and funded from the landlord's rent pool, or whether it is a specific housing support service targeted at a particular group of vulnerable people; and
- the level of detail of analysis to be undertaken in identifying the costs of a support service, particularly where it is provided by staff who are also performing core landlord functions as part of their work.

5.1.3 Some services which landlords should account for through the revenue account could be more costly to provide where tenants have support needs. Examples include wear, tear and replacement costs of furniture and equipment, and some aspects of maintenance, concierge services and housing management. Pooled rental charges and specific HRA service charges are expected to continue to provide for the costs of these services. However, they will interrelate with support services, in that the provision of effective, good quality housing support services can play an important part in minimising such costs.

5.2 Distinguishing housing support services from housing management

5.2.1 Housing management, housing support, home care and meal services and personal care form a continuum. A simple distinction cannot be made. Housing support provided by Supporting People is:

- developing an individual's capacity to live independently in the community, or sustaining their capacity to do so;
- expanding tenure choices – for example for an individual who might remain in or be admitted to institutional care, or become homeless or suffer tenancy breakdown, if support were not provided; and

- based on an agreement between the service provider and the user to provide and receive support, with agreed objectives.
(Note: for many tenants this “agreement” may be an implicit aspect of their tenancy or their use of the support service – for example sheltered housing tenants, young people living in a supervised housing and support scheme, or people with a mental illness accessing a peripatetic support service as and when they need it.)

5.2.2 Housing management services deliver standard services for all tenants irrespective of need, for example new lettings activities designed to introduce a tenant to the property. This may from time to time include support similar to that provided through the Supporting People programme. In other words, housing management can also assist some people to avoid tenancy breakdown and provide advice on sustaining a tenancy – but this is normally advice given whenever the need arises, and not as part of an agreed and planned package of support.

5.2.3 Housing management services also include intensive management services which may be provided on an ad hoc basis to help a tenant deal with a temporary crisis. Examples would include where a family is receiving racial abuse and requires support while the problem is resolved, or where a tenant is bereaved and needs short term assistance to take on new responsibilities, such as paying bills or arranging repairs.

5.3 General definition of housing support services

5.3.1 In making this distinction between housing support services and housing management for the purposes of implementing this Guidance, local authority and other rent pooling landlords should bear in mind that housing support services:

- form part of an identified, planned support activity for particular tenants, some or all of whom may live in ordinary housing, but who are all clearly identified as vulnerable;
or
- are provided in sheltered housing schemes supported by a warden service, which are intended for letting to older people;
or
- are provided to all tenants who occupy particular accommodation (referred to in Appendix II as a housing and support scheme), such as a hostel which is normally let by the landlord to vulnerable people in need of general counselling or support, and where these services are provided by a manager or staff team mainly to residents of the accommodation (the designated staff may be resident at the scheme or, if not, must be available to tenants through a call system);
and
- may be provided by clearly identified and specialist staff, or as a specific, planned task by staff providing a wider range of services.

5.3.2 Landlord / housing management services to the same tenants and the properties in which they live include:

- property maintenance, repair and improvement;
- the provision, servicing and replacement of equipment and other building features and communal amenities;
- building heating and lighting, grounds maintenance;
- housing management, to discharge the landlord function in respect of all tenants.

The costs of these services should all be accounted for through the HRA or similar rent pooling landlords' revenue accounts. It is in the last area where landlords may need to use their judgement to distinguish between housing support service costs and housing management costs.

5.4 Detailed definitions

5.4.1 Schedule 2 of Appendix II summarises the Housing Revenue Account as defined in the CIPFA publication "Best Value Accounting: code of practice" (© CIPFA 6 March 2001) (referred to below as BVACOP). It identifies the activities whose costs are to be accounted for under each of the mandatory and discretionary (indicated with an asterisk) account headings from April 2003. Account headings that are not related directly to property maintenance or general housing management have been omitted. Details of the headings omitted and included are provided after Schedule 3. Positive entries in the housing support services column indicate activities or accounts which may contain elements of support costs, which should be disaggregated and excluded from the HRA from April 2003, using the principles outlined in sections 5.2 and 5.3 above.

5.4.2 These activity accounts are shown in further detail in Schedule 3 of Appendix II, where activities reflecting the Supporting People, DSS (now DWP), and "welfare" definitions summarised in Schedule 1 have been added beneath the relevant CIPFA discretionary account heading from Schedule 2. The columns to the right of these activity descriptions indicate whether the full cost of the activity concerned will always be either an HRA cost or a support cost, or whether it may in some cases be the former, and in other cases the latter. Notes to this Schedule included in Appendix II provide examples and guidelines to be used in making distinctions.

5.4.3 Rent pooling landlords will need to translate the BVACOP account descriptions for local authority HRA accounts into those used in their management accounts, but the former are expected to be broadly self-explanatory.

5.5 Component elements of housing support costs

5.5.1 The costs of housing support services should include the costs of activities associated with or arising from the provision of support services, such as dealing with complaints about the service, and allocating housing support services. For instance, when allocating a tenancy in a housing and support scheme, the cost of work to assess whether the housing support offered can meet the particular needs and preferences of the individual should be identified as a housing support cost, not a housing management cost.

5.5.2 The identified costs of housing support should be calculated on the basis of *Gross Total Cost* as defined by CIPFA in section two of the BVACOP in order to harmonise this information with RO/RA forms, BVPIs etc. This Guidance provides for the Gross Total Cost to include employee costs, expenditure relating to premises and transport, supplies and services, third party payments, transfer payments, housing support services and capital charges. However, the definition of *Total Cost* in BVACOP excludes the cost of Corporate and Democratic Core (CDC) and Unapportionable Central Overheads (UCO). These terms are explained in section two of the BVACOP. Landlords will need to consider whether it would be appropriate to add in any part of the costs falling into these two categories (CDC and UCO). A key consideration should be how any such costs will be met from April 2003 when it will no longer be possible to fund the provision of support services from the HRA. If any of these costs are currently funded from pooled rent income in the HRA, but will not be from April 2003, then they need to be included so that alternative provision is made for them in the Supporting People grant. Therefore all rent pooling landlords' identified costs of housing support service provision are likely to include:

- salary and salary-related costs of staff providing the service;
- employment-related costs of staff providing the service (e.g. training, recruitment, etc.);
- costs of the operational infrastructure involved in delivering the service (e.g. staff office accommodation, IT equipment, etc.);
- a relevant proportion of general overhead costs (e.g. accountancy, IT support, audit);
- a relevant proportion of corporate costs (e.g. senior management costs and other corporate charges); and
- capital charges on any assets involved in the delivery of the service.

5.6 Apportionment of costs

5.6.1 Where staff are engaged in providing both housing management and housing support services, it will be necessary to estimate the portion of their salary and related costs attributable to the respective accounts. Whilst application of Activity Based Costing may be useful, the Scottish Executive is inclined to leave to the discretion of authorities and other rent pooling landlords the balance between the accuracy and robustness of the analysis and the effort required to achieve it. It is possible, for instance, that management estimates of the proportions of time spent on activities will suffice, as compared with an intensive time-logging exercise, but it should be borne in mind that:

- the basis for apportionment must be documented for audit purposes;
- the costs of housing support services will become subject to scrutiny through the local authority processes for scheme review and for the establishment and renewal of forms of agreement;
- rent pooling landlords' returns recording 2001-02 expenditure from the rent pool to cover previously "hidden" costs of housing support services will feed into the process of setting local authorities' Supporting People grant for 2003-04; and
- forms of agreement entered into in 2002 between the local authority and the landlord service provider may not provide enough flexibility for variation of costs over the life of the agreement.

5.6.2 The BVACOP referred to above includes principles of apportionment within the definition of total cost. They include:

- complete recharging of overheads;
- correct receipts;
- transparency;
- reality;
- flexibility;
- predictability/stability;
- materiality.

Appendix 2 of the BVACOP gives guidance on the application of these principles.

6. Accounting and Operational Preparations

A number of the provisions of the Supporting People programme outlined below do not apply exclusively to rent pooling landlords but are referred to in this Guidance for the sake of providing a complete overview.

6.1 Rent adjustments

6.1.1 Rent pooling landlords need not reduce their rent levels to reflect the exclusion of housing support costs funded through pooled rents (see section 3.4). However, changes to the rents payable by tenants who currently receive housing support services, and who make some additional payment in respect of this support, are likely to be necessary:

- if additional elements of rent and/or service charges are payable in respect of services in particular types of accommodation but are not currently broken down into charges for the specific services, then any part of such additional rent that is funding housing support should be identified now as a service charge for support and claimed under the THBS. Such changes can be made without increasing the total amount that tenants pay;
- where the service charge for supported housing covers services provided to tenants in the wider community, landlords should identify the costs attributable to the wider housing support service and allocate a service charge to those tenants from 1 April 2003, when these tenants will be treated as transitional tenants (see section 3.6);
- when Supporting People is introduced in April 2003, landlords should adjust their service charges to remove charges for those support services eligible for Supporting People. In future, payments for support will be made to the provider from the Supporting People grant, and the local authority will arrange to charge clients where appropriate.

6.2 Effective date for rent adjustments

6.2.1 Rent pooling landlords will need to make changes in charges for housing support due from tenants coincide with the cessation of the THBS and preferably with the effective date of their annual rent adjustment. Where rent is paid weekly or in weekly multiples, THBS remains in force until 6 April 2003 and the first rent week after its cessation commences on Monday 7 April 2003. In any other case, the THBS remains in force until 31 March 2003.

6.3 Tenant consultation and information

6.3.1 Good practice requires landlords to involve tenant representatives in planning for the changes which must be implemented with the introduction of the Supporting People programme. Landlords must ensure that tenants who receive services, or who are considering using services, are fully aware of the implications for them. Landlords will need to prepare programmes of briefing and information for staff and tenants to ensure that this is achieved.

6.4 Certification

6.4.1 The Scottish Executive will require data to be certified by the landlord's Chief Financial Officer in respect of housing support costs incurred in 2001-02. The certification will be required by January 2003. This will feed into the process of setting local authorities' Supporting People grant for 2003-04.

6.4.2 Landlords will need to ensure that their arrangements provide an audit trail from the data to be certified back to their supporting calculations and prime records.

Appendix I

Costs of support financed by pooled rent income Form for returns

Local authorities should return this information to:

Jean Waddie, Scottish Executive Development Department, Housing 3-2, Area 1-G, Victoria Quay, EDINBURGH, EH6 6QQ

Other rent-pooling landlords (RSLs) should return this information to:

Pat Bagot, Communities Scotland, Thistle House, 91 Haymarket Terrace, EDINBURGH, EH12 5HE

Returns should be made according to the timetable set out in section 4 of this Guidance.

SUPPORTING PEOPLE: Costs of support financed by pooled rent income		
Return date:		Estimates / Actual / Certified return for financial year 2001-02 /2001-02 /2002-03 (delete as appropriate)
Name of Local Authority / RSL:		
Name, address, tel no and e-mail for primary contact:		
Service description ⁽¹⁾	Local authority area ⁽¹⁾	Amount of pooled rent income being used to finance support expenditure ⁽²⁾ (£ per year)

(For final return) Certification by Chief Financial Officer:

I certify that the above form has been completed in accordance with the guidance on Identifying Housing Support Service Costs and the amount of Pooled Rent Income Financing Housing Support Services.

(Signed).....

Notes:

- (1) The **minimum requirement** is to identify separately the amounts being spent in different local authority areas. Where services / expenditure span more than one local authority area, the figures should be broken down to identify expenditure in the different areas as separate entries.

It is optional whether a further service breakdown is included with this return. However, landlords are expected to do this locally so that separate figures are available for each service or area for which there will be a form of agreement with a Supporting People commissioning and purchasing section, as this will be essential for both the landlord and the local authority and their strategic partners when it comes to making the transition to Supporting People. In any such breakdown, please use your own description of each service which best reflects the service user group, the service provided, your own organisation structure and conventions, etc.

- (2) Please enter here the amount of pooled rent income financing support expenditure that will be excluded from the HRA after April 2003. **Exclude** any support costs / expenditure financed by service charges for support that will be identified through the Transitional Housing Benefit Scheme, or being financed using any other resources, such as from the non-HRA, the general fund, other specific grants, or contributions from other agencies. **Include** all elements of the Total Gross Cost of support that are being financed by pooled rent income - as specified in BVACOP 2001 Section 2 or, by other landlords on a comparable basis (section 5.5 provides a summary of the BVACOP provisions). For initial estimates only part year data may be available, if so these should be scaled up to give an estimate for the full year.

Appendix II

Housing Support Service Activities

NOTE: The definitions and allocation of activities to funding streams given in the following schedules are illustrative. Final definitions of services eligible for Supporting People will be issued following consultation, and may differ from these examples.

Schedule 1 - Summary of Previously Published Definitions of Housing Support

NOTE: The definitions and allocation of activities to funding streams given in these schedules are illustrative. Final definitions of services eligible for Supporting People will be issued following consultation, and may differ from these examples.

Source: Supporting People Consultation Document 1998	Source: Housing Benefit Regulations (HB/CTB A47/99 and HB/CTB A10/2001 Relating to Transitional Housing Benefit)	Source: Welfare services as defined in SNAP6 form
Supervision		
General counselling	General counselling and support	
Managing anger and behavioural problems		
Advocacy		
Companionship		
Advice	Advice on budgeting or debt management	Advice to new tenants, help with budgeting, debt, operating a bank account etc
Life-skills training	Life-skills training	
Assistance with admin i.e. forms	Assistance with Benefit claims	Advice about Housing Benefit, Income Support etc
Community Alarms	Charges for emergency alarm system	
	Maintaining security of dwelling	
	Arranging adaptations for disabled people	Arranging adaptations for disabled people
	Ensuring tenants can safely use appliances	Advice on use of appliances and fixtures
	Dealing with neighbour disputes	Assistance in settling issues between tenants and neighbours
	Helping with repairs which are the tenant's responsibility	Assistance to tenant on home maintenance and enhancement of property
	Help with moving on to new accommodation	Assistance to tenants in exercising choice in matters relating to the tenancy including moving on
	Shopping, errand running	
	Chatting, social intercourse	
	Good neighbour tasks	
	Arranging social events	
	Cleaning in tenant's home	

Schedule 2: General plan of relevant Housing expenditure heads and funding streams after 1 April 2003

NOTE: The definitions and allocation of activities to funding streams given in these schedules are illustrative. Final definitions of services eligible for Supporting People will be issued following consultation, and may differ from these examples.

Mandatory	* Discretionary	Account description (as CIPFA "Best Value Accounting Code of Practice")	HRA rent and service charges			Gen Fund/SP
			Core rent	Property/estate services	Amenities charges	Support services
		Repairs and Maintenance				
		* Response repairs	YES			
		* Planned maintenance	YES			
		General Management				
		* Policy & Management, including:				
		Voids management/reduction	YES			
		Receipt/transmission repairs requests	YES			
		Management of property improvements	YES			
		Administration of Council house sales	YES			
		* Managing tenancies including:				
		Giving information and advice on tenancy	YES			YES
		Statutory consultation about stock transfer	YES			
		Receiving tenancy applications/assessing eligibility	YES			YES
		Waiting list management	YES			
		Allocations/letting dwellings and other properties	YES			YES
		Transfers and exchanges	YES			YES
		Advising tenants' groups	YES			
		Facilitation of tenant participation	YES			
		Support to TMOs	YES			
		Producing reports to tenants	YES			
		* Rent collection and accounting, including:				
		Reviewing and setting rent levels	YES			
		Preparation of the rent roll	YES			
		Rent collection	YES			
		Recovery of arrears	YES			YES
		Advising tenants on benefit entitlement to minimise risk of arrears	YES			YES
		Rent accounting and internal audit	YES			
		Special Services				
		* Heating	YES		YES	
		* Communal Lighting	YES		YES	
		* Lifts	YES		YES	
		* Laundry Services	YES		YES	YES
		* Caretaking	YES	YES		
		* Concierge schemes	YES	YES		
		* Cleaning	YES	YES		YES
		* Ground maintenance	YES	YES		
		* Welfare services excluding essential care, eg:	YES		YES	YES
		Sheltered housing wardens	YES		YES	YES
		Community alarm	YES		YES	YES
		Mobile wardens	YES		YES	YES
		* Other special services	YES	YES	YES	YES

Schedule 3: Allocation of activities to funding streams after 1 April 2003

NOTE: The definitions and allocation of activities to funding streams given in these schedules are illustrative. Final definitions of services eligible for Supporting People will be issued following consultation, and may differ from these examples.

Activity	Rents/other HRA charges		General Fund/Supporting People		Notes
	Always	In some cases	Always	In some cases	
Managing tenancies				See Note 2	1
Allocations/letting dwellings					
Advice on setting up home		YES		YES	2
Advice on available assistance with moving		YES		YES	
Provision of furniture/equipment	YES				3
Giving information & advice on tenancy					4
Advice on available life skills training		YES		YES	
Provision of life skills training			YES		
Organising repairs which are tenant's responsibility under tenancy agreement			YES		
Applying for grants with or on behalf of the tenant		YES		YES	
Arranging adaptations for disabled people				YES	
Liaising with specialist agencies and care providers		YES		YES	
Dealing with disputes with neighbours		YES		YES	5
Transfers and exchanges					2
Advice on housing options		YES		YES	
Assistance with application forms		YES		YES	
Assistance with viewing offered accommodation/making choice		YES		YES	
Rent collection and accounting					6
Recovery of arrears					
Advice on budgeting/debt management		YES		YES	
Advising tenants on benefit entitlement					
Assistance with benefit claims		YES		YES	
Special Services					7
Laundry Services					
Installation/maintenance of laundry equipment		YES			
Undertaking laundry for tenants			YES		
Cleaning services					8
External windows/public areas	YES				
Internal public areas/windows	YES				
Within tenants' homes			YES		
Welfare services excluding essential care					10
Shopping/chatting/arranging social events			YES		
Community alarm equipment installation and maintenance		YES		YES	
Community alarm call answering			YES		
Community alarm call action			YES		
Other Special services					11
Estate Security					
Develop security strategy with police		YES		YES	
Liaison with police		YES		YES	
Installation/maintenance of security systems	YES				

Note: Schedules 2 and 3 omit a number of HRA expenditure headings on the grounds that they are not relevant to the purpose of this Guidance. The following schedule summarises the HRA Expenditure accounts (England and Wales) published in the CPIFA BVACOP. Those included in Schedules 2 and 3 are indicated by an asterisk.

* Repairs & Maintenance
* Response repairs
* Planned maintenance
* General Management
* Policy & Management
HRA share of strategic housing management costs
Keeping records of dwellings, tenants, repair works
* Voids management/reduction
* Receipt/transmission repairs requests
* Management of property improvements
* Management of planned maintenance
* Administration of Council house sales
* Tenant consultation
* Managing tenancies
* Giving information and advice on tenancy
* Statutory consultation about stock transfer
* Receiving tenancy applications/assessing eligibility
* Waiting list management
* Allocations/letting dwellings and other properties
* Transfers and exchanges
Tenancy regulations and agreements
* Advising tenants' groups
* Facilitation of tenant participation
* Support to TMOs
* Producing reports to tenants
* Rent collection and accounting
* Reviewing and setting rent levels
* Preparation of the rent roll
* Rent collection
* Recovery of arrears
* Advising tenants on benefit entitlement to minimise risk of arrears
* Rent accounting and internal audit
* Special Services
* Heating
* Communal Lighting
* Lifts
* Laundry Services
* Caretaking
* Concierge schemes
* Cleaning
* Ground maintenance
* Welfare services excluding essential care
Rent, rates, taxes and other charges
Rent rebates
Transfers to General Fund
Increase in provision for bad and doubtful debts
Capital financing costs
Capital expenditure charged to revenue
Interest payable on overdrawn revenue balance
Working balance

Notes to the Schedules

General Introduction

The danger in preparing schedules of activities or costs is that they become restrictive, rather than enabling, in their application. This Appendix should be interpreted bearing two factors in mind:

- A key objective of Supporting People is to facilitate the future development and diversification of housing support services to meet local needs. The schedules of activities above, and the examples provided below, reflect only the current situation and practices. They are intended for application to the immediate problem of identifying housing support costs prior to 2003, particularly those currently accounted for within landlords' general management accounts. As experience increases, landlords (and other agencies) may develop the range of housing support activities to meet changing circumstances, using Supporting People grant and other General Fund resources.
- Because the schedules above, and the examples provided below, have been prepared with the aim of mapping the split between landlords' housing management and housing support activities and costs, it is very probable that they do not represent all housing support activities currently undertaken, for example, within specialist programmes offering a high degree of support. Final definitions of eligible services will be issued at a later date, following consultation.

Notes to Schedule 3 above:

1. Positive entries ("YES") in the columns headed "Always" or "In some cases" indicate that the costs of services listed in the far left-hand column:
 - are in all cases ("Always") either chargeable to the HRA (or other landlord revenue account maintained by RSLs) or excluded from the HRA (or similar). Services excluded from the HRA are usually housing support services, but may in some cases be home care or personal care.
 - may ("In some cases") be chargeable to the HRA where the service offered is available to all tenants as need arises, or may be housing support service costs where the service offered falls within the general definition provided in section 5.3 of the main body of this Guidance.

The following are in all circumstances landlord / housing management services and are included in Schedule 3 for the sake of clarity in contrast with housing support costs, which are discussed further in the notes indicated:

- provision of furniture / equipment (Note 3);
- installation / maintenance of laundry equipment (Note 7);
- cleaning of public areas and common area windows, internally and externally (Note 8);
- installation / maintenance of security systems (Note 11).

The following are in all circumstances excluded from the HRA and are discussed further in the Notes below:

- provision of life skills training (Note 4);
- organising repairs which are tenant's responsibility under the tenancy agreement (Note 4);
- laundry of items provided by the landlord (Note 7);
- cleaning windows or other internal parts, furniture or fittings within tenants' homes (Note 8);
- promoting tenants' social skills, activities and confidence (Note 9);
- answering and taking action in response to community alarm calls (Note 10).

Costs relating to the allocation of housing support services should be identified as part of the cost of the support service. So, for example, in allocations to housing and support schemes, any assessment and other costs associated with establishing whether the support provision will meet the individual's needs and preferences should be identified as a support cost.

2. Where advice on assistance with moving or advice on setting up home are offered to tenants or potential tenants as part of a programme of support falling within the general definition of housing support services provided in section 5.3 of this Guidance, the costs of this service are a housing support cost. Examples include advice offered to potential tenants who are being housed, or tenants who are moving to new accommodation:

- under identified programmes of resettlement in the community from institutional care, from street homeless programmes or from special accommodation provided by other agencies; or
- where an existing tenant is moving into or out of a sheltered or housing and support scheme; or
- where the advice is offered by staff specially designated and trained to provide a range of support services within identified programmes (as in a specific advice or floating support service).

In this context of a housing support service, the term "advice" might also include active assistance to individual tenants in choosing and ordering personal possessions and other aspects of setting up their home.

Where this advice is offered by generic housing staff and is available, should need and occasion arise, to any tenants or prospective tenants, this should be regarded as a landlord / housing management activity. Examples include advice offered to a young single mother, an elderly person or a disabled person who is moving from and into general needs accommodation and/or where there is no ongoing agreement to provide them with other forms of support services to address identified vulnerability.

The same considerations apply to activities relating to housing transfers and exchanges within the landlord's stock.

3. Some landlords provide services which include assistance to tenants in furnishing their home, either by providing furniture or by helping them to select and arrange delivery. The provision of furniture or equipment within a tenant's home or within common areas is not ever a housing support cost. If this service is provided within a sheltered or a housing and support scheme, and a charge is made, this should be a housing management charge. Assistance to tenants in *organising* the furnishing of their home is a housing support cost.
4. The housing management activity of providing information and advice on the sustainment of their tenancy extends among many landlords where individual tenants' circumstances give rise to the need and occasion, into such activities as:
 - advice on life skills training which may be available;
 - applying for grants (for instance, for furniture or home loss) for or on behalf of the tenant;
 - liaising with specialist agencies and care providers on the tenant's behalf;
 - arranging care or other non-landlord assistance;
 - liaising with, or advising, tenants' relatives on the services provided.

Where such services are available generally to all tenants living in, or moving into, general needs accommodation who may require such assistance on a temporary, ad hoc basis – those, for instance, who are elderly, inexperienced, facing personal difficulties, confused or under particular stress – and are provided by general housing staff, these are landlord / housing management activities. Where, however, these services fall within the general definition of housing support services provided in section 5.3 of this Guidance, the cost of providing them will be regarded as housing support service costs.

Some services are not regarded as part of the landlord / housing management service. They may be provided by landlords at present under the umbrella of "tenancy sustainment", such as the provision of life skills training, or of organising repairs to a tenant's home which are, under the terms of the tenancy agreement, the tenant's responsibility. The cost of such services is a housing support service cost.

5. The provision of supervision is a housing support service (e.g. maintaining a staff presence in a housing and support scheme for young people) – see also Note 11. However, housing managers’ reactive work to deal with disputes between neighbours is a normal part of the landlord’s responsibility, including in sheltered and housing and support schemes. Dealing with disputes which may be exacerbated by the design of some specialised accommodation is not necessarily different in principle from dealing with those exacerbated by the design of some general needs housing stock (for instance, inadequate sound-proofing).

Dealing with disputes, which may be aggravated by the behaviours or lifestyles of the parties concerned, is part of the business of effective estate management. Where the landlord makes additional input to support vulnerable tenants in building their relationships with their neighbours, or in changing a lifestyle or behaviour which is aggravating the dispute, this may well be a housing support service.

The provisions of Note 4 above would apply to these additional services. For instance, help to tenants in securing more specialist support or care, and advice on sources of additional help, are offered by many landlords to any tenant where need and occasion arises. However, where they are provided to tenants receiving specific programmes of support, or living in sheltered or housing and support schemes, as described in section 5.3 of this Guidance, these services will be regarded as housing support services.

Some landlords, in the context of resolving neighbour disputes, offer more intensive services to specific tenants requiring support. These might include:

- practical assistance in making alterations within the tenant’s home living arrangements;
- provision or organisation of life or interpersonal skills development training;
- provision or arranging entry to programmes offering meaningful employment;
- engagement in activities geared to promoting the tenant’s social life, skills and confidence.

These are all activities to address specific, identified support needs through a programme of work with the individual, and as such are to be regarded as housing support costs.

6. Many landlords provide intensive services to all tenants who have material arrears of rent and/or are claiming Housing Benefit, as a legitimate housing management activity geared to the effective collection of rent income. In the first case, such services may involve advice on personal budgeting and the management of personal indebtedness. Such advice may be offered by specialist money advisers, by specialist arrears management staff or by generic housing staff. The Scottish Executive takes the view that personal money-management advice is only a housing support service where the service is provided alongside other support services (such as tenancy sustainment services discussed in Note 4, or welfare services discussed in Note 9) in a manner which falls within the general definition set out in section 5.3 of this Guidance.

Similarly, landlords go to great lengths to support tenants through their dealings with their Housing Benefit office, with the objective of effective collection of rental income. Such services may include, for instance:

- assisting tenants with the proper completion of application forms and compliance with claim verification requirements, including advice on the documentation required and assistance in presenting it in person to the Housing Benefit office;
- assisting tenants to identify changes in their circumstances which will require a new claim.

Where these and similar services are provided to all HB claimants who, in the landlord's opinion, need assistance, perhaps due to their personal circumstances or difficulty in understanding forms and procedures, these are appropriate landlord / housing management services. The costs of such services become housing support costs where they are provided alongside other support services (such as tenancy sustainment services discussed in Note 4, or welfare services discussed in Note 9) in a manner which falls within the general definition set out in section 5.3 of this Guidance.

7. The provision of laundry equipment in shared facilities in sheltered or housing and support schemes, or in tenants' homes (or of other domestic equipment, such as cookers or refrigerators) in all cases falls within the HRA or similar revenue account. Where laundry of items provided by the landlord, such as curtains or bedding, is undertaken for the purpose of sustaining the tenancy, it is always a support cost. Laundry of tenants' personal items is likely to be a personal care service.
8. Cleaning of internal and external areas which are shared between tenants, the cleaning of windows in those areas, internally and externally, and the external cleaning of windows of tenants' homes all fall within the HRA or similar revenue account. Where the internal rooms or windows of tenants' homes are cleaned for them, because they are unable to do it, or to arrange to do it, themselves, this is a care or support cost.

9. Activities such as shopping, errand running, chatting and arranging social events are housing support services where they are provided in the context of a programme of support falling within the general definition outlined in section 5.3 of this Guidance and are geared to counteracting the social isolation of vulnerable tenants and/or developing their ability to live more independently of other support services. They are not in any case considered a housing management function.

It is recognised that a far wider range of services than those listed in Schedule 1, which are focused upon promoting the social life / skills and confidence of tenants, are currently provided in sheltered or housing and support schemes. Examples include programmes of activities for tenants in new technology, the arts and community development. Many of these services are currently funded through charitable and other non-public funds. While the Scottish Executive envisages that many of these services will, by virtue of their objectives, be housing support services under the definition given above, it is not the intention that local authorities should have either the Supporting People grant resources, or the obligation, to fund services which have been financed from charitable and other non-public sector sources. Such projects may, at the local authority's discretion, be considered as pipeline projects to be taken up by the authority when other funding comes to an end.

10. Community alarm services are evolving among many local authorities and other landlords as technological capacity and customer need for out-of-hours urgent contact increase. Many landlords now procure their alarm service for supported tenants alongside out-of-hours repairs, environmental health, community safety and other landlord and non-landlord services. The Scottish Executive has taken the view that:

- where an alarm service is “hard-wired”, forming part of the fabric of the building, the costs of the equipment, together with the costs of its installation and maintenance, are housing management costs;
- where portable alarm equipment, such as a system which plugs into a standard telephone socket, is provided to tenants who fall within the general definition outlined in section 5.3 of this Guidance, the costs of the equipment installed in the tenant's home, together with the costs of its installation and maintenance, are housing support costs. It is expected that this type of equipment will increasingly become the standard, and the equipment costs will therefore gradually transfer from housing management to housing support;
- the costs of work to answer alarm calls from tenants who fall within the general definition outlined in section 5.3 of the Guidance is a housing support cost, where there is an identifiable and planned workload associated with this work. This includes the work of dedicated community alarm response call centres, or an appropriate proportion of the cost of work in a more general call centre intended to deal with community alarm calls alongside other work such as repairs requests and general enquiries. As set out in section 5.5 of this Guidance, the full costs associated with the work should be identified, including capital charges for the call centre equipment;
- services delivered as a result of an emergency call to tenants who fall within the general definition outlined in section 5.3 should be classified in accordance with this Guidance.

11. The costs of installing and maintaining security systems or adapting buildings to improve residents' security are not housing support costs, but housing management costs. Where staff are located at, or take particular responsibility for, a sheltered or housing and support scheme falling within the general definition at section 5.3 of this Guidance and they offer supervision and accessible help to enhance the safety (and sense of security) of the residents and their neighbours, the relevant cost of their time is a housing support service cost. Examples include:

- maintaining a presence in the scheme, for example, to monitor and supervise residents' activities, to be available to respond to problems, or to satisfy health and safety requirements arising from the nature of the client group;
- providing a reassuring presence to residents, and taking action to allay fears for their safety, such as reminding them to lock up;
- taking measures to reduce crime, including violence, within the scheme, including restricting access to certain individuals or groups, and establishing a relationship with local police and calling on their assistance when necessary.

Concierge schemes or CCTV surveillance in general housing are considered to be landlord / housing management services, as such services are not designed to respond to the particular support needs of vulnerable groups but rather the everyday security of all residents, who may include some supported tenants.

Annex 1 – Worked Example For Transitional Tenants’ Rebate (see section 3.6)

Mrs White moved into a sheltered flat in Sandieburn Court after her husband died. She was lonely and thought that being with other people of the same age would be a good idea. She also liked the idea that the warden would check on her every day and drop in for the occasional chat. Mrs White’s husband had an occupational pension and they also had some savings put away for their old age. When Mrs White moved to her new house her income was assessed and she was told that she would have to pay the full rent as she was not entitled to Housing Benefit. Inverlochy Council does not charge sheltered housing tenants for the warden service, alarm system and other facilities at Sandieburn Court but pools these costs across all its rents. Mrs White pays £154 per month rent.

Inverlochy Council has been told that it must separate out the costs of its housing support service from its general rents and charge these to the tenants who use the services from April 2003. Tenants will be assessed and those who are receiving benefit¹ will have these charges met in full or part by the Council through Supporting People Grant. Mrs White will be required to pay the full cost of the service, £120 per month. Under the arrangements for the introduction of Supporting People, Mrs White will become a “Transitional Tenant”, and her new monthly charges will be phased in over three years as follows:

2003-2004	Rent £154	Support Charges £0
2004-2005	Rent £154 (+ any annual increase)	Support Charges £41*
2005-2006	Rent £154 (+ any annual increase)	Support Charges £79

In April 2006 the full support charge would be levied.

* or 34% of the actual costs if costs have increased. The rebate will continue to be calculated on the level of support provided in April 2003, taking account of any increase in charges due to inflation etc up to April 2006.

However, Mrs White’s arthritis becomes worse and in April 2004 she decides to move to a nearby very sheltered housing complex, where the landlord is a housing association, where she can have an adapted flat and some additional support from a resident warden. She will now have to pay a higher rent, and the support charges at McLelland Court are also higher. Mrs White has taken this into consideration and has decided she can afford the new charges. She will continue to be treated as a “Transitional Tenant” and her support cost will continue to be rebated by £79 per month for 2004-2005 and £41 in 2005-2006.

Unfortunately, a few months after moving, Mrs White has a bad fall and she requires accommodation specially adapted for a wheelchair user. Her landlord offers her an adapted house in another complex in an adjacent local authority area. Mrs White moves and her “Transitional Tenant” status is preserved. Inverlochy Council and her new council have made provision for this eventuality in their cross authority arrangements.

¹ This method of means-testing has been used just for the purposes of this worked example. The methods for charging and means-testing in relation to Supporting People will be the subject of future consultation.

Finding out more about Supporting People

This programme is being developed in a manner that seeks the full participation of the providers, current funders, local authorities and user groups. This is essential to ensure that the complexities of the patterns of current provision and diversity of interests provided for are taken into account at the planning stage.

Full details of the programme can be found at the Supporting People Website, which is at www.scotland.gsi.gov.uk/housing/supportingpeople. This site will be continuously updated and will include:

- overview of the programme
- all Supporting People publications, guidance and consultation papers
- an extensive range of frequently asked questions which will be constantly updated, based on the types of questions which have been asked at seminars, meetings, and in contacts with the Scottish Executive and others
- links to other government departments involved in the Supporting People programme, and other initiatives linked to the programme.
- contact details for the people responsible for implementing Supporting People at local and national level
- details of the stakeholders groups involved in planning and implementing the scheme, and minutes of their meetings
- information on the implementation timetable and milestones

How to get in touch with us:

If you have any comments or questions about the programme and its implementation, or if you require copies of any Supporting People publications, please contact **Jean Waddie** at:

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