

Meeting the Needs of Households at Risk of Domestic Violence:

The Role of Accommodation and Housing Related Support Services

Funded by
Communities and Local Government

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Background to the research

- Importance of appropriate accommodation and housing related support recognised at policy level. Three key areas:
 - Assistance for households that are homeless as result of domestic violence
 - Supporting People funding (now via Area Based Grants) for housing related support services
 - Sanctuary scheme services to enable households to remain in their own homes safely
- Relative lack of research – this project is one of three DCLG projects to address this gap

Research aims

- Three main aims:
 - Establishing the housing options that are currently available for households at risk of domestic violence in England;
 - Establishing whether current provision meets the needs of households at risk of domestic violence, and;
 - Identifying what gaps in services exist.
- Scope of the research
 - Sanctuary schemes
 - Refuges and other accommodation based services
 - Floating support/ outreach services
 - Access to settled housing

Research methods I

- Mapping exercise of provision
 - Inc. Supporting People databases, the *UK Gold Book*, web searches and new surveys (below)
- New surveys of provision
 - *A survey of local authorities*: to identify the local provision & explore views on appropriateness of service mix (full responses: 185 LAs; partial: 252 LAs).
 - *A survey of service providers*: to gather more detailed information on services and views on adequacy of services. With assistance of Women's Aid. (Responses from 321 refuges/ accommodation based services; 226 floating support services; 62 sanctuary schemes)

Research methods II

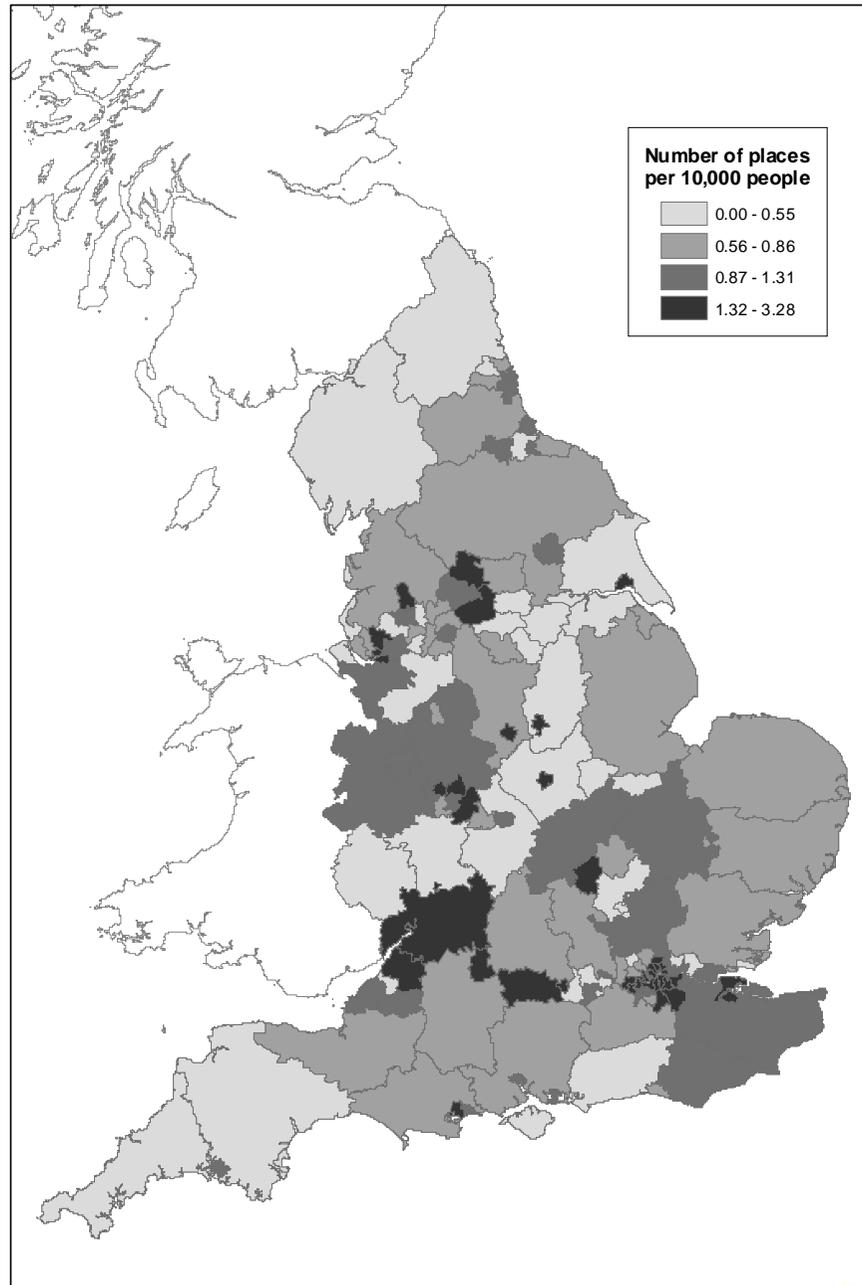
- Qualitative work
 - *Telephone interviews with key experts:*
 - To explore the overall patterns of service provision and possible areas of unmet need.
 - *Consultations with service users and service providers:*
 - Five focus groups with service users (44 women)
 - Two consultation events with key service providers (19 agencies)
- Analysis of key national data sources
 - SP client record; outcomes data; PIE; CORE

Refuges and other specialist accommodation I

- The mapping exercise found:
 - 445 accommodation based services specifically designed for h/h at risk of domestic violence (88% described as refuges)
 - Representing an average of 0.96 places per 10,000 people in population
 - 93% of counties/ unitary authorities had some provision; some differences by region/ urban-rural areas
 - 16% of schemes for BAMER communities

Accommodation based services for households at risk of violence relative to population in Region

Region	Total services	Household Places ¹	Mean places per 10,000 population
London	93	872	1.30
East Midlands	48	407	0.70
West Midlands	55	483	1.25
Yorkshire & Humber	38	365	0.77
South East	64	608	1.01
East England	39	364	0.70
South West	42	387	0.96
North East	20	153	0.73
North West	46	396	0.70
Total	445	4,035	0.96



Accommodation based services

Refuges and other specialist accommodation II

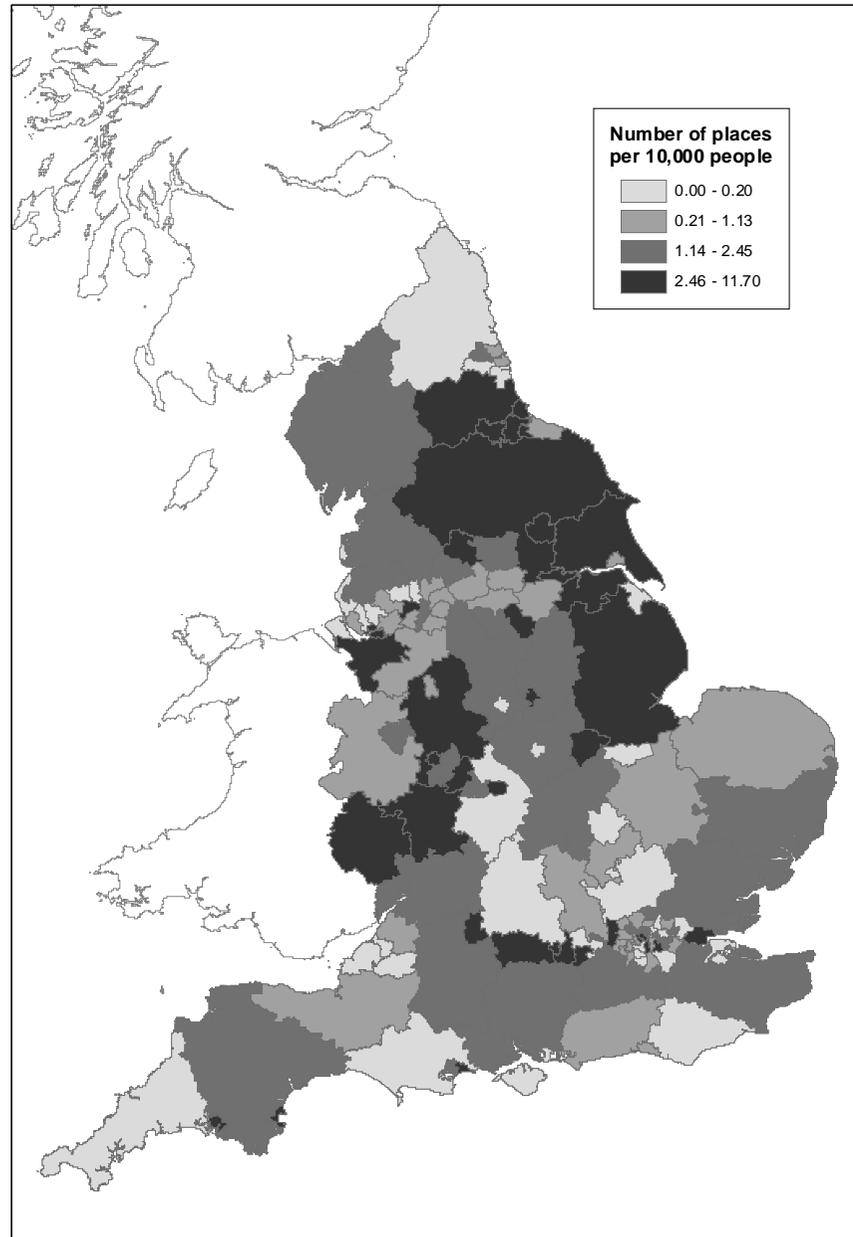
- Wide range of support provided to residents (wider than services with a secondary function of DV), for example:
 - 96% help with homeless application; 94% provided safety planning; 83% provided counselling ; 81% helped with employment, education or training; 78% provided follow-up support; 75% had dedicated children &/or young person worker
- Wide operational area – 70% of referrals from other LAs
- 24% were usually able to accommodate people with MHP; 33%, people with substance misuse issues
- 9% fully wheelchair accessible; 43% ground floor units
- 58% of providers reported that service users needs were met very well; 31% quite well; 11% mixed success
- Respondents stressed safety and support features

Floating support services I

- The mapping exercise found:
 - 301 services for h/h at risk of domestic violence, providing over 7,750 places
 - Representing an average of 1.7 places per 10,000 people in population
 - Operating in 79% of counties/ unitaries in England; rural areas had proportionately more services
 - 26 specialist services for BAMER households

Floating support services for households at risk of violence relative to population in Region

Region	Household places ¹	Places per 10,000 population
North East	658	2.5
Yorkshire and Humber	1,162	2.3
East Midlands	1,108	2.3
West Midlands	1,132	2.1
South East	1,059	1.9
South West	664	1.9
London	823	1.2
North West	679	1.1
East of England	484	1.0
Total	7,769	1.7



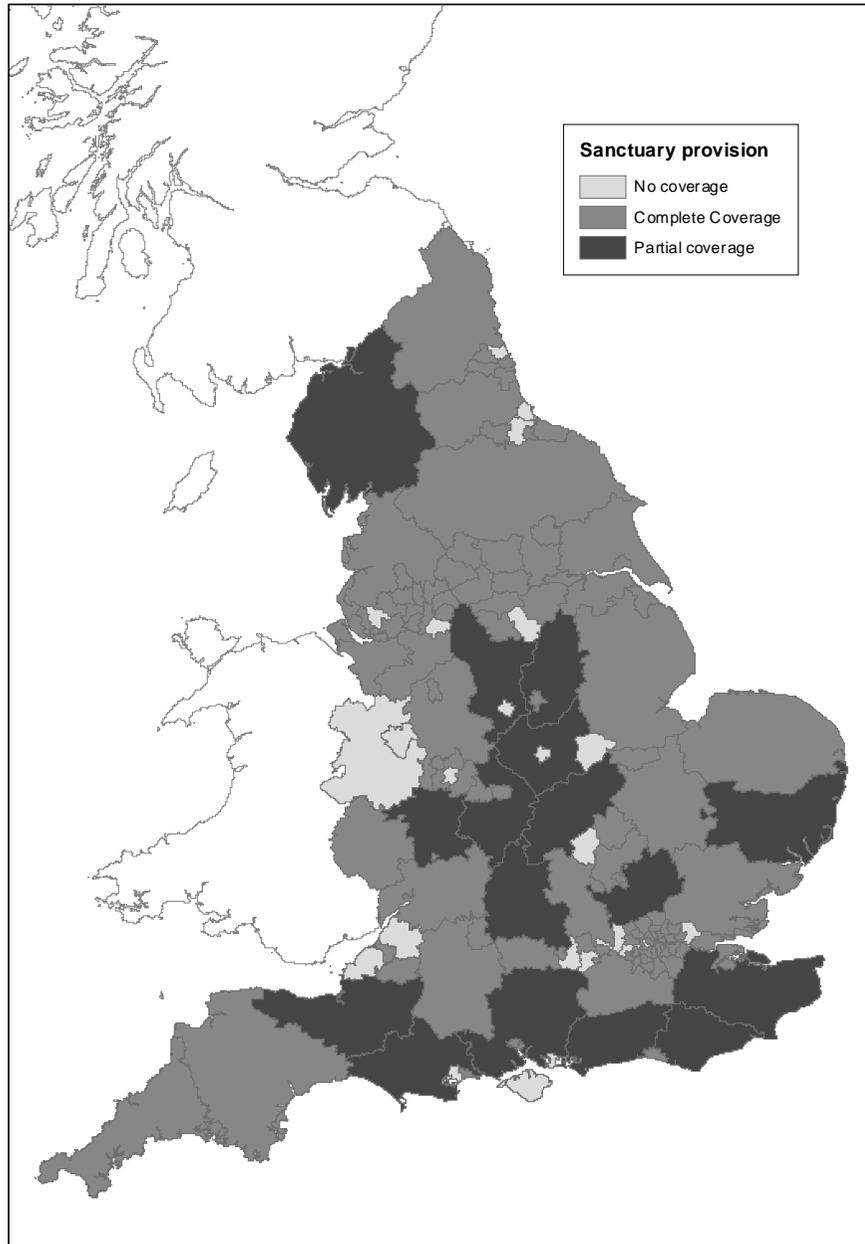
Floating support services

Floating support services II

- Wide range of support provided to residents, similar to accommodation based provision (e.g. 96% safety planning); fewer services for children
- 37% were usually able to support people with MHP; 41%, people with substance misuse issues
- 47% of providers reported that service users needs were met very well; 43% quite well; 10% mixed success
- Respondents stressed flexibility and preventative focus

Sanctuary scheme services I

- The mapping exercise found:
 - 77% of all local housing authorities had access to sanctuary scheme services
 - Less provision in rural areas
 - Some differences by Region (ranging from 65% of LAs in East Midlands to 95% of LAs in Yorkshire and Humber)



Sanctuary scheme services

Sanctuary scheme services II

- Most commonly reported services: extra locks and bolts (92%), fire safety equipment (87%), external security lights (84%) and alarms (83%). 71% fitted sanctuary rooms
- 68% of schemes had an accompanying support service and 49% offered legal advice and support
- 89% of schemes could usually support people with MHPs; also 89% for people with substance misuse issues
- 40% of providers reported that service users needs were met very well; 43% quite well; 16% mixed success; 2% not very well
- Respondents valued as additional option for households whilst identifying need for further development of model

Access to settled housing

- 78% of LAs had a published directory of services; 53% reported information was 'very' or 'quite' good in their area
- Specific policies re: DV on housing registers and transfers were more likely to be in place in London and unitary areas than district authorities
- Most LAs (65%) reported they were 'usually' able to meet main homelessness duty within six months; 64% of LAs frequently made use of refuges as TA
- Respondents stressed overall lack of suitable settled accommodation for h/hs at risk of DV in England

Overall assessment of provision

- Mapping exercise showed no evidence of extensive service 'deserts' i.e. parts of England with no services
- However, evidence that relative levels of service provision are variable (also for BAMER groups)
- Providers perceived greater need for new services than LAs; similar assessment of need for sub-groups
- No association between provision levels (absolute or relative) and expressed need to expand services
- Some concerns amongst providers about future funding and changing service priorities
- Flexibility in funding and joint commissioning identified by LAs as key factors enabling new service development

Average (mean) in both specialist accommodation services and floating support services per 10,000 population

Regions	Average (mean) places in floating support and specialist accommodation services per 10,000 population
West Midlands	3.7
North East	3.3
East Midlands	3.1
Yorkshire & Humber	3.0
South East	2.9
South West	2.9
Greater London	2.5
North West	1.8
East of England	1.6
England	2.7

Need for additional services?

Service type	LAs	Service providers	Difference
Expand floating support	39%	65%	+26%
Expand specialist accommodation	31%	65%	+34%
Expand sanctuary scheme provision	20%	41%	+21%
Base	186	245	

Any additional services needed for specific subgroups?

Subgroup:	LAs	Service providers	Difference
BAMER groups	41%	45%	+4%
Men	9%	53%	+44%
No recourse public funds	63%	75%	+12%
LGBT	43%	45%	+2%
Multiple needs	53%	53%	0%
Substance misuse	56%	55%	-1%
Mental health problems	44%	61%	+17%
Disabled people	33%	48%	+15%
Learning difficulties	29%	46%	+17%
Older people	24%	31%	+7%
Young people	50%	62%	+12%
Perpetrator schemes	44%	56%	+12%
Base	186	245	