

# #KeepSP\_NI Campaign continues to gather momentum

Earlier this year, NIHE implemented a five percent funding reduction across accommodation-based SP schemes, putting the viability of many schemes at risk. In recent weeks, the Department for Communities gave NIHE a one-off non-recurrent £2.6million allocation to the programme, however there is uncertainty over how the funding can be drawn down and fears that monies received will be cut again in April 2018.

Ricky Rowledge, co-Chair of Committee Representing Independent Supporting People Providers (CRISPP) said, “While any reprieve is welcomed, this is a partial and temporary in-year reinstatement that does not cover the full scale of the budget reduction and service providers will again be facing a five percent budget reduction in six months’ time. Organisations cannot start to reintroduce or replace services and staff that have impacted by the cut in April.



*Clanmil's Supporting People Open Day at Templar Court, Lurgan*

“We are urging the Housing Executive to maintain full funding for 2018. We are up for reform and want to work in partnership with the Housing Executive and

Department for Communities to deliver a strategic remodelling of the programme.”

Independent research has shown that every £1 spent in Supporting People schemes saves £1.90 for other public services. The loss of funding will not just affect the quality of life for more than 20,000 people it will result in a greater cost burden on other public spending.

Ben Collins, Chief Executive of the Northern Ireland Federation of Housing Associations said: “This short term saving will have a profound and expensive long-term legacy. Services cannot be sustained at the standard required and there is a very real danger that those in most need will not receive adequate support or may lose out entirely. We are calling for NIHE to reinstate the funding immediately to all providers and work in partnership with us to agree a sensible reform and strategy for Supporting People.”



*The SP roadshow at Clanmil’s Barbour Court, Enniskillen*

We are currently at the half way point of our Road Show campaign, which sees SP providers hosting Open Days in each constituency across Northern Ireland.

This morning, the campaign was in Enniskillen while tomorrow there will be Open Days in Strabane, Carrickfergus and Comber.

The campaign is attracting media coverage on television and radio as well as in regional, local and trade press. In addition, there’s a lot of traction on social

media, with more than 137,000 impressions over the last two and half months.

Significantly, public representatives from across the political spectrum are adding their voices to our campaign too. A total of 14 MLAs, 22 councillors and 1 MP attended the first 7 of our planned 16 Open Days. (13 SDLP, 9 SF, 8 DUP, 3 UUP, 1 GP, 1 AL, 2 IND).



Ark Housing hosted a Supporting People Open Day at Roseville House in South Belfast.

The schedule of forthcoming Open Days is as follows.

13 <sup>th</sup> October	11:00am	Shelter NI	GABLE, Strabane
13 <sup>th</sup> October	3:30pm	Kilcreggan	Elizabeth Avenue, Carrickfergus
13 <sup>th</sup> October	10:00am	Alpha Housing	Stepping Stones, Comber
17 <sup>th</sup> October	10:00am	Simon Community	2 Flush Park, Lisburn
20 <sup>th</sup> October	10:00am	Alpha Housing	McManus Court, Newry
25 <sup>th</sup> October	10:30am	Clanmil Housing	Ardnaskea, Coalisland
27 <sup>th</sup> October	10:00am	Alpha Housing	Agherton Grange, Portstewart
27 <sup>th</sup> October	10:00am	DePaul	Cloverhill, West Belfast

Find out more and join the campaign  
on: [Twitter.com/KeepSP\\_NI](https://twitter.com/KeepSP_NI) or [Facebook.com/SupportingPeopleNI/](https://facebook.com/SupportingPeopleNI/)