

Charnwood Borough Council

Older Persons Housing Strategy

Consultation Document



This information is available in different formats. To access these please phone (01509) 634560.

এ তথ্যাদি অন্যান্য মাধ্যমে পাওয়া যায়। এসব পোতে হলে দয়াকরে (01509) 634560 এ নাম্বারে টেলিফোন করুন।

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Introduction

The aim of the strategy is to set a direction of travel to ensure everyone has a home that meets their needs in old age that they feel comfortable living in, and from where they can access the necessary care and support that they require.

Traditionally, in terms of access to Housing and Services, older people have been defined as those over 60. However, peoples' needs and expectations do not suddenly change on their 60th birthday.

The Department of Health National Service Framework for older people identified three broad groups of older people:

- **Entering old age** These are people who have completed their career in paid employment and/or child rearing. This is a socially-constructed definition of old age, which, according to different interpretations, includes people as young as 50, or from the official retirement ages of 60 for women and 65 for men. These people are active and independent and many remain so into late old age. The goals of health and social care policy are to promote and extend healthy active life, and to compress morbidity (the period of life before death that is spent in frailty and dependency).
- **Transitional phase** This group of older people are in transition between healthy, active life and frailty. This transition often occurs in the seventh or eighth decades but can occur at any stage of older age. The goals of health and social care policy are to identify emerging problems ahead of crisis, and ensure effective responses which will prevent crisis and reduce long-term dependency.
- **Frail Older People** These people are vulnerable as a result of health problems such as stroke or dementia, social care needs or a combination of both. Frailty is often experienced only in late old age, so services for older people should be designed with their needs in mind. The goals of health and social care policy are to anticipate and respond to problems, recognising the complex interaction of physical, mental and social care factors, which can compromise independence and quality of life.¹

It is worth noting that each of the phases will come at different times for different people and so to tie them to specific ages other than at the broadest level is to misunderstand older people's needs and our approach to allocating properties by age will need revisiting.

¹ National Service Framework for Older People, DOH March 2001 p3

Lifetime Homes, Lifetime Neighbourhoods: A National Strategy for Housing in an Ageing Society

In February 2008 the government published a national housing strategy giving older people greater choice and addressing the challenges of an aging population

At the heart of the strategy are proposals to future proof new housing provision, a focus on age friendly neighbourhoods together with increased support for older peoples to remain in their homes.

Why an Older Persons Housing Strategy?

Predicted demographic changes suggest that an increasing number of older people will need support and accommodation in years to come.

The table below shows the expected increase in Older People throughout Charnwood through to 2025

	2008	2010	2015	2020	2025
People Aged 65-69	7,000	7,800	9,500	8,800	9,100
70-74	6,100	6,300	7,200	8,900	8,200
75-79	5,200	5,200	5,600	6,500	8,100
80-84	3,600	3,800	4,200	4,700	5,500
85+	3,200	3,300	3,800	4,400	5,200

(Data taken from Leicester and Leicestershire SHMA)

By taking a strategic approach now we are able to ensure that we meet the changing accommodation needs of the Borough in years to come.

Areas for Action

There are three areas that we wish to explore further to meet our objectives.

1. Provision of Housing Advice Services
2. Supporting people to remain in their homes
3. Ensuring older peoples housing meets needs and aspirations

Provision of Housing Advice Services

To ensure that older people are able to make informed choices about their housing it is important that all older people, their carers and advocates are able to access high quality and timely person centred advice.

This could cover a wide range of areas such as:

- What services are available to support them in their current home
- What other accommodation options are available
- What benefits and financial assistance are available
- What are the best options to free up equity in their home if they are owner occupiers



Who is best placed to provide advice to older people?

Some Questions we need to consider:

Where do people currently go to access housing advice for older people?

For example is it through housing advice services or specialist older persons services such as Help the Aged.

Are there any gaps in the advice currently available?

Who is best placed to deliver the advice?

For example would a one stop shop be more appropriate or a range of specialist services.

What is the best method of delivering the advice?

Increasingly we look to technology to deliver information. Is this an appropriate method for older people?

Example: Single Access Point

Earlier this year Charnwood introduced a Single Access Point provided by a local housing advice agency, for 16/17 year olds to co-ordinated all agencies that provide housing assistance to young people.

The SAP approach allows a high quality and consistent advice service to the group

Ensuring older peoples housing meets needs and aspirations

Whilst it is clear that people are increasingly choosing to remain in mainstream housing for longer it is still important that accommodation aimed at older people is fit for purpose and future proofed.

Like many providers Charnwood Borough Council has significant numbers of bedsits that no longer meet the expectations of many older people.

Some questions we need to consider:

Should we try and develop new older persons accommodation whilst existing units sit empty?

Is it reasonable to develop accommodation larger than older people need if it frees up traditional family housing?

What is the best approach for dealing with existing accommodation?

What role has the private sector to play in older persons housing if it has met peoples needs for the rest of their lives?

How do we identify what older persons housing will need to look like in 10, 20 or even 30 years time?



There is a shortage of Extra Care provision like Connaught House across the County

Supporting People to remain in their homes

Currently there is a range of services that allow people to remain in their own current home such as lifeline services, assistive technology and Disabled Facilities Grants.

Some Questions we need to consider:

Are there better ways we could co-ordinate services?

Are there any gaps in the services that older people can access?

Are people able to keep up to date with advances in technology that will allow them to remain in their homes?

Example: Charnwood Lifeline

Charnwood Lifeline has recently upgraded its technology. This means it is now able to provide a whole host of new services such as fall alarms and medication prompters, calendar clocks and water flow alarms

These 3 areas are not mutually exclusive and quite clearly housing advice is crucial in allowing people to make informed decisions about whether to remain in their existing accommodation or whether there are more appropriate options available.

Furthermore there are a number of issues that need to be considered across all of these areas such as:

How do we ensure that services are culturally appropriate?

How do we engage hard to reach groups?

How do we ensure fair pricing for services in light of varying levels of income and equity?

To allow us to feed your views into the first draft of the strategy it would be helpful if you could respond by **midday on the 12th December**.

We are particularly keen to hear from organisations that are currently reviewing or developing services for older people to make sure that we are able to gain a co-ordinated overview of this area.

The responses we receive from this consultation will inform the strategy and feed directly into the action plan. We intend to consult on possible actions to be included in the strategy in mid-December

To comment on any of the issues raised in this document, contribute to the Older Persons Housing Strategy, or to be kept informed on the progress of the strategy please contact:

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