

Charnwood Borough Council

Older Persons Housing Strategy

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Introduction

Ensuring older people are able to access the housing and services that they need is important. As the number of people reaching old age is increasing the number of ways people will want to access accommodation and services will increase as well and we need to ensure that we are ready to adapt.

There have been a number of recent documents about providing for older people including, the Audit Commission's "Don't Stop Me Now," Preparing for an ageing population and the Governments "Lifetime Homes, Lifetime Neighbourhoods: Housing in an Ageing Society."

The Older Persons Housing Strategy sets out how Charnwood will address these challenges.

Who are older people?

There is clearly no age at which someone suddenly becomes "old," or changes from being independent to needing particular services. However as people get older they are more likely to need particular services.

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 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.

Aims of the Strategy

The aim of the Older Persons Housing Strategy can be summarised as:

“to ensure that the housing needs of the ageing population of Charnwood are met through a full range of housing options that marry aspirations with need.”

To achieve this aim the strategy had a number of objectives. These can be summarised as:

- To try and understand likely future demand for accommodation and services
- Ensure best use is made of existing accommodation to meet the needs of all older people.
- To identify ways to develop new housing for older people
- To ensure older people are aware of the options available to them.

Evidence

The table below shows the predicated rise in people aged over 65 living in Charnwood over the next 15 years

Charnwood	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
Total	25,100	26,400	30,300	33,300	36,100

Projected levels of care (Leicestershire)

A study carried out across Leicestershire called the Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) tried to estimate the level of care for older people that would be required across the whole of Leicestershire

	2008	2010	2015	2020	2025
Older people helped to live at home	7,408	7,846	9,173	10,124	11,102
Households receiving intensive home care for people aged 65 and over	1,128	1,195	1,397	1,542	1,691
Older people receiving community-based services provided or commissioned by the councils with social services responsibilities (CSSR)	12,637	13,384	15,647	17,269	18,938

Currently within Charnwood there are around 2,500 older people supported through funding called Supporting People (SP)

Description	Units
Frail Elderly	38
Sheltered Accommodation	960
Community Alarms	1477

Older Peoples Housing Needs and Aspirations across the Leicester and Leicestershire Housing Market Area

Whilst the SHMA was being developed the local authorities involved decided that they needed to better understand what sort of accommodation and services older people actually want.

The group successfully bid for funding from the Regional Housing Group and have now appointed Salford University to carry out some research.

The project aims to get a better understanding of:

- The housing size, type and tenure of housing needs and aspirations of older people and understanding of housing options available to inform the type of provision for supported and extra care accommodation for older people
- The services and support networks which are important to older people, their access to them, their expectation and opinion of different types of supported housing and support service models
- The impact of movement of older people upon the existing housing stock, including cross boundary migration patterns and future housing requirements.

The study is now underway and the report is due later in 2010.

Partners

Although the strategy was developed by staff within Charnwood Borough Council's housing department to be successful it will require a range of organisations to work together. The strategy was developed with the assistance of colleagues from a range of organisations and other Council departments including

- The Health Service
- The Bridge Housing Advice Service
- Supporting People
- Care and Repair
- Adult Social Care

- Housing Associations and other providers
- Planning Policy
- Charnwood Neighbourhood Housing
- Age Concern

Consultation and what we did

In developing the strategy we consulted with lots of people. As well as Older People themselves we also consulted with organisations that provide services to older people.

We held a number of workshops with people who work with older people.

We had meetings with older people including those who were on the Council's housing waiting list and those who lived in the Council's sheltered housing at the moment.

We also sent out a questionnaire to a group of people over 60 who were on the Council's housing waiting list but had refused offers of accommodation and also placed a survey on the Council's website for people to complete about what housing they thought they might want when they got older.

From all of the things we learnt during this consultation put together a list of what we could, should and will do in the future. This became the strategies action plan and sets out work we will carry out over the next five years.

Some of the things we decided to do are quite broad such as "Consider options to meet the needs of people with dementia" whilst others are quite specific.

For example someone suggested on a questionnaire that we ought to have a website address that was easier to remember and so we have now registered the name www.olderpersonshousing.co.uk and this will take you straight to the pages of the Council's website about older people's housing.

The Three Themes

Through the development of the strategy there were three areas that we needed to focus our attention on.

These were:

- Providing advice services
- Supporting people to remain in their homes
- Ensuring older people's housing meets their needs and aspirations

Within each of these areas we identified a number of issues that needed addressing. Some of these are listed below

Providing Advice Services

- How do we ensure that all the organisations that work with older people know what each other does?
- How can we make sure older people are able to access information when they need it?
- How do we deliver advice throughout the borough when we are based in Loughborough?
- How do we encourage older people to plan for their futures before they are in crisis?

Supporting people to remain in their homes

- How do we make sure older people can remain in their homes for as long as they wish?
- How do we make sure that the cost of services are fair and reasonable?
- How do we make sure the sort of home you live in doesn't affect the services you can get
- How do we minimise the amount of time older people have to stay in hospital whilst services are sorted out?
- How do we make sure older people do not become isolated in their own homes?

Ensuring older peoples housing meets needs and aspirations

- How do we make the best use of the housing that we already have?
- How do we make sure new housing for older people is good enough?
- How do we allow for flexibility as aspirations and expectations change?
- How do we get more Extra Care accommodation?
- How do we make sure that people who own their own home and don't want to rent get the services they need?

Most of the actions that were in the action plan were placed under one of these three headings however there were also a number of issues that were important in all of the areas including

- How do we make sure older people are part of any decisions we make and
- How do we make sure that services meet all peoples needs regardless of their culture?

Strategy Action Plan

To ensure that the strategy achieves what it set out to we developed an action plan with all of the things we want to do to address the questions raised. This is monitored by a panel to make sure that we are doing what we said we would.

The action plan has 25 actions within it. To see the full action plan you should contact the housing strategy department or you can find it on the Council's website as part of the Older Persons Housing Strategy at

http://www.charnwood.gov.uk/files/documents/older_persons_housing_strategy_2009/Older%20Persons%20Housing%20Strategy%20%282009%29.pdf

Glossary

Extra Care- housing for people with high care needs. Sometimes thought of as very sheltered housing Meals and health services are often provided.

Housing Associations- provide social housing along with local council's. Housing Associations are often charities.

Regional Housing Group- a group made up of representatives from local government, housing associations, the private sector etc. The group produces the regional housing strategy and represents housing at a regional level.

Sheltered Housing- a description covering a range of housing for older people, often with communal facilities and some kind of on-site staffing

Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA)- a new way of identifying housing need and current housing supply that looks across a housing market area

Supporting People (SP)- the organisation that decides which support services to fund. Part of the County Council in non-unitary areas.

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

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