

Strategic Housing Services
Salisbury District Council, 26 Endless Street,
Salisbury, Wiltshire SP1 1DR

Andrew Reynolds
Head of Strategic Housing Services
01722 434357
areynolds@salisbury.gov.uk

Report

Report Subject : Older Persons Housing Strategy Framework
Report to : The Cabinet
Date : Wednesday 13 December 2006
Author : Andrew Reynolds
Cabinet Member for Community & Housing: Councillor John Cole-Morgan

1. Purpose:

To present a framework for the development of the council's strategy to meet housing and support needs of older people in a strategic way and to set out the Authority's housing commitments. The proposed strategy will link closely with the council's Housing Strategy and the 5-year Supporting People Strategy for Wiltshire.

2. Introduction:

National policy surrounding housing and support services for older people centres on promoting independence and enabling individuals to choose from a wide range of housing and support options.

Older people need, want and are entitled to equal access to good quality, responsive services that will enable them to live their life to the full. Salisbury has a significant older population and the housing and support needs of older people are a growing issue.

As the strategic housing authority for Salisbury, the council has a duty to explore the key housing issues affecting all groups and proposes to develop and publish an Older Persons Housing Strategy as a focal point for addressing their particular housing and support needs.

3. Proposed framework:

The framework draws on the recent extensive research 'Beyond the Immediate' in order to inform much of the context. The strategy will also need to encompass the varied services being delivered to older people. There are six key themes that will be developed as follows:

3.1 Providing quality of housing

Good quality housing is crucial if older people are going to have the choice to remain at home and lead healthy and active lives within their communities. Housing needs to be well maintained, able to be adapted for mobility needs, warm, affordable, in a location close to amenities and transport and with access to other support services when they are needed. This will include:

- Social housing
- Private sector housing
- New build housing
- Safe environments and transport



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As well as the provision of good quality housing the council is either responsible for, or provides funding to or jointly commissions other related support services. This will include:

- Community alarms and assistive technology
- Anchor Staying Put – Home improvement agency
- Floating Support services
- Equipment and adaptation

3.3 Improving sheltered housing

The council is preparing a specific plan to identify where investment is required to improve its sheltered housing accommodation. This will need to tie in with the current strategic review being undertaken by the Wiltshire Supporting People Team and Wiltshire County Council's Extra Care Strategy. This will include:

- Improving buildings
- Improving services
- Meeting the needs of frailer older people

3.4 Improving joint working with other agencies

To maintain their independence and good quality of life older people need access to affordable, well-maintained and adaptable housing. They also need to be able to access a variety of services including transport, amenities such as shops and leisure and learning activities as well as health and personal care services in times of illness. They also need to feel safe and secure within their home and neighbourhood.

The need for better joined up working between health services, social care and housing has been highlighted nationally and locally. To be effective, services need to link together both at an operational and strategic level. There is a specific Local Area Agreement around older people and this strategy will need to make definite links with this work stream. This will include:

- What is already happening
- What more needs to happen

3.5 Improving information and advice

One of the common themes that continue to emerge from other consultation is the need to improve information and advice about services to older people. People need advice about a wide range of housing, support and related issues such as homelessness, fuel poverty, safety and security and adaptations. The aim will be to examine how best to achieve a system that delivers comprehensive advice.

3.6 Involving older people

Older people have a huge amount to offer their communities particularly in terms of time and experience. Ageism in the provision of services needs to be recognised. One way to challenge ageist attitudes within services is to ensure the involvement of older people. This will include:

- Why must we involve older people
- What more needs to happen

A detailed action plan will be produced setting out how the key themes of the strategy will be implemented.

4. Consultation:

Subject to Cabinet approval of the framework there will be an extensive consultation process including tenants, the voluntary sector and the statutory agencies. The intention is to undertake this between January and March 2007 and to have a draft strategy for consideration by Cabinet in May 2007.

5. Recommendation:

Cabinet are recommended to approve the proposed framework for the Older Persons Housing Strategy and to authorise the consultation exercise to inform the development of the seven themes.

6. Implications:

Financial:	None
Legal:	
Human Rights:	Article 8 (the right to respect for private and family life) does not confer the right to a home.
Personnel:	None in respect of this report
Community	None in respect of this report
Safety:	
Environmental:	None in this report
Council's Core Values	Promoting excellent service, supporting the disadvantaged, being fair and equitable, communicating with the public, wanting to be an open, learning council and a willing partner.
Wards affected:	All
Consultation undertaken	Contained in the Report