



Care Services Improvement Partnership **CSIP**

**Housing Learning and  
Improvement**  
Network

# Putting Older People First in the South West

## Taking the Strategy Forward

November 2008



# Taking the Strategy Forward

The South West region faces a range of urgent issues over the next 15-20 years (see executive summary and main report). Briefly, these can be summarised as:

- A major growth in the numbers and proportion of older people within the region.
- A corresponding decrease in the proportion of middle-aged people, and potential providers of care, in the population.
- Gaps in service provision for older people and an ageing, in some instances inappropriate, sheltered housing stock.
- Rural isolation and increasing costs of providing services in rural areas.
- A lack of strategic planning (Don't Stop Me Now [Audit Commission, 2008] found that South West local authorities were the least prepared in England for the ageing population).

This paper sets out the evidence of where the South West region is in relation to the indicators for Public Service Agreement 17 (PSA 17) and explores the next steps that both strategic and delivery agencies operating in the region need to take through radical interventions in the housing and care market to raise performance against these indicators. These include: the Government Office in the South West (GOSW), other regional delivery agencies such as the Homes and Communities Agency and Tenant Services Authority, local authorities, the private sector, Registered Social Landlords and voluntary organisations – all working in partnership with health and social care commissioners.

Indicator	Evidence	Forward agenda
The percentage of pensioners on low income.	Above average levels of fuel poverty and poor energy efficiency among older people, particularly in the private sector, coinciding with above average excess winter deaths among people aged 85 and above. It is estimated that 12.1% of households in the South West are living in fuel poverty (250,000 homes). Around half of these homes will house people over 65 years.  21% of people aged 65 and over living without central heating.	<p><b>Strategic:</b> Regional bodies urgently need to produce a regional inclusion strategy and implementation plan that addresses fuel poverty and energy efficiency amongst older people.</p> <p><b>Operational:</b> Local authorities need to work with Registered Social Landlords (RSLs) to improve thermal comfort and reduce fuel poverty.  Home Improvement Agencies and Warmfront, information and advice will play an important part in reducing fuel poverty amongst older homeowners and tenants.</p>

Indicator	Evidence	Forward agenda
<p>The proportion of people who are satisfied with their home and their neighbourhood.</p>	<p>There are relatively high levels of owner occupation in the region: particularly among the younger old: 84% of 60-64 year olds are owner occupiers compared with 71% of those aged 85 and above.</p> <p>However, it is known from research that as people age they increasingly find their property hard to manage, although most older people want to stay in their own home as long as possible.</p> <p>Of older people in non-decent housing, the majority are owner occupiers.</p>	<p><b>Strategic:</b></p> <p>Regional bodies need to work with commissioners, providers and older people's groups to produce a regional housing strategy on housing for an ageing society and an implementation plan to inform future planning and inward public and private sector housing capital investment and advise on associated housing, care and support revenue requirements.</p> <p><b>Operational:</b></p> <p>Local authorities need to work with RSLs to improve the quality of housing across all tenures for older people.</p> <p>There needs to be an increased emphasis on developing and promoting Home Improvement Agencies, Disabled Facilities Grants, handy person schemes, information and advice.</p>
	<p>RSLs in the South West provide over 44,500 homes for older people and those with specialist support needs. There is increasing evidence from commissioners and providers that much sheltered housing is no longer fit for future populations of older people, in terms of design, size and space, or accessibility standards.</p>	<p><b>Strategic:</b></p> <p>Regional bodies need to urgently promote reviews of current sheltered housing stock and facilitate appropriate action to use this valuable asset most effectively.</p> <p><b>Operational:</b></p> <p>Local authorities at both a unitary, county and district level, together with RSLs need to review the condition, accessibility, location, and value of current sheltered housing stock, and establish priorities for adaptation, refurbishment, replacement or sale.</p> <p>Reviews should also take account of private sheltered housing and the relationship of private to public / RSL provision as compared to current tenures within the older persons population.</p>

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	<p>There are wide variations across the region in the level of provision of extra care housing. There are also variations in the amount of extra care housing for rent and for sale between authorities.</p> <p>Less than half of the local authorities in the region have extra care housing for sale. Transforming Social Care calls for work to shape and develop local and regional markets with the capacity and variety to offer the range of options the population demands.</p>	<p><b>Strategic:</b></p> <p>Regional bodies need to develop systematic approaches to collating housing market intelligence for older people and, in particular, the demand for extra care housing.</p> <p>Regional housing and planning boards need to engage with local planning authorities to produce authority wide approaches to both planning and the design standards of housing for older people. They need to support RSLs in working with the private sector to develop a range of options across tenures as a means to market development.</p> <p><b>Operational:</b></p> <p>Local housing and social care authorities need to establish the level of need for extra care housing in each area and the appropriate balance between accommodation for rent and for sale.</p>
<p>The extent to which people over 65 receive the support they need to live independently at home.</p>	<p>Growing numbers of older people (especially women) living alone who are more likely than others to require public care and support as they become frailer to enable them to live independently.</p>	<p><b>Strategic:</b></p> <p>Regional bodies need to develop and support effective approaches to sustaining older people in their own homes.</p> <p>Regional planners need to ensure age-proofing of all new homes and neighbourhoods across all sectors.</p> <p><b>Operational:</b></p> <p>Local Authority commissioners need to plan for expansion of Home Improvement Agencies, Disabled Facilities Grants, telecare and assistive technology, Warmfront, information and advice. Via the Supporting People Programme to improve ‘floating support’ arrangements and links with greater personalisation of services in order to enable more older people to remain in their own homes across all tenures.</p>

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	<p>Over-representation of older people in rural areas where access to services and other facilities is increasingly difficult and the distances and dispersed nature of older people in the countryside adds to the costs of traditional service provision.</p>	<p><b>Strategic:</b></p> <p>Regional bodies need to identify the minimum set of services and other facilities required to sustain older people in their communities in terms of older people's desired outcomes and incorporate this into regional planning frameworks.</p> <p><b>Operational:</b></p> <p>Health and social care commissioners need to develop models of care and support that reduce duplication of effort and resources, eg, through multi-tasking by staff, effective information sharing in alliance with assistive technology to maximise effectiveness.</p>
	<p>Taking the over 85 year old population and extrapolating that for the likely numbers of people with a dementia across the region would see an increase from 36,000 to 56,000 over the next seventeen years.</p>	<p><b>Strategic:</b></p> <p>Regional and local housing authorities need to support an expansion in the range of housing options available to older people and floating support, including those with dementia.</p> <p>Regional bodies need to implement the recommendations of the government's dementia strategy.</p> <p><b>Operational:</b></p> <p>Attention needs to be given to ensuring that housing developments are 'dementia friendly' and reflect the various design guides that have recently been produced. Regional bodies and local authorities could help support knowledge of dementia, planning and design through training events.</p>
	<p>There will be a corresponding increase in groups of older people requiring specialist provision, for example, people with learning disabilities, mental health and alcohol problems.</p>	<p><b>Strategic:</b></p> <p>Regional bodies need to implement the recommendations of the Independent Living Strategy on housing and Valuing People Now strategy.</p>

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		<p><b>Operational:</b></p> <p>Regional and local housing authorities need to support an expansion in the range of housing options available to older people and floating support.</p>
	<p>The growth in the oldest population will also be matched by a diminution in the proportion of people in early middle age who are potential care providers.</p>	<p><b>Strategic:</b></p> <p>Regional bodies need to review and support progress in implementing the government's Carer's Strategy.</p> <p><b>Operational:</b></p> <p>Health and social care commissioners need to develop models of care and support that reduce duplication of effort and resources, eg, through multi-tasking by staff, effective information sharing in alliance with assistive technology to maximise effectiveness.</p> <p>PCTs should work with local authorities to build on the recently completed Joint Strategic Needs Assessments to analyse key pressures on NHS services that might be affected by housing design and location.</p> <p>These pressures might include, falls, dementia, strokes, COPD These should be informed by health profiles of older people and local service requirements to meet their needs and reduce health inequalities.</p>



# Taking the strategy forward

The Housing Learning and Improvement Network will be working closely with regional agencies in the South West to build the capacity and capability across housing, health and social care commissioners and providers to meet the housing with care needs and aspirations of an ageing population in the region. In particular, in partnership with the Regional Improvement and Efficiency Partnership in the South West, we will develop a cross-sector leadership programme.

Through our regional network steering group we will also link in with regional bodies such as the new regional Homes and Communities Agency and Tenant Services Authority, Strategic Health Authorities/Primary Care Trusts, regional Social Care leads, planning, housing and housing support organisations and user groups to work collaboratively on policies, practices and procedures that will achieve positive outcomes for older people in the region.

For further information on our regional network meetings and leadership programme contact:

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