

# Housing Learning & Improvement Network

Care Services Improvement Partnership 

Health and Social Care  
**Change Agent Team**

## Extra Care Housing is not just for Older People - Supporting people with physical disabilities in Bradford

This article, first published in Community Care 2-8 February 2006, outlines an innovative large supported housing scheme in Bradford which demonstrates that the 'extra care' housing model is not just for older people. It can work well for severely disabled adults under pension age and be a genuine alternative to residential care. The author illustrates how the right environment and support reduces levels of dependency and reduces the need for intensive packages of care.

By **Jim Ledwige**, Bradford Metropolitan District Council

Joanne is 49 years old and is severely disabled through cerebral palsy. Until 4 years ago she had never lived independently. She met her husband, Andrew, at Beechwood Residential Care Home, where she and he lived until the home was finally closed in July 2001. Andrew is blind and before moving to Beechwood had found independent living too difficult.

Now Joanne and Andrew live together in a two bedroom bungalow which is part of the Westwood Park 'Extra Care' Housing Scheme. The Scheme is run as a partnership between Bradford Council Social Services Department and Hanover Housing Association. Joanne and Andrew are delighted. As Joanne puts it 'you've got your own privacy, you can do what you want, it's fantastic. I just can't say how happy I am to have a place of my own'.

She admits to being worried before she and Andrew made the move 'I thought, ooh heck, on my own. Oh no I'm not looking forward to it... but when I came here, I found it not bad, it was kind of lovely. I really enjoyed it and I do enjoy it to this day.'... 'I don't want to go in a home again, no way. I want my independence. I think independence is great for any disabled people. Ask anybody who's disabled.'

In its response to the government's Green Paper on Adult Social Care <sup>1</sup>, the ADSS agreed that there is scope for expanding new models of care such as extra care housing but pointed to the need to develop knowledge about what really works <sup>2</sup>. Most of the development of extra care housing to date has been for older people, and this client group, along with people with learning disabilities, is the focus of the government's Extra Care Housing Fund. However, the Westwood Park Scheme is clear evidence that extra care

housing can work for younger physically disabled adults and is a genuine alternative to long-term residential (or even nursing) home provision.

At one time Beechwood had been home to up to 40 disabled people but in the early 1990s it became clear that the building could not be economically upgraded to meet new registration standards. From the very outset the residents of Beechwood were involved in trying to find a solution, and after much discussion and visits by them to various schemes around the country, they decided that they wanted independent living but with 24/7 care and support.

When the local NHS decided to sell a large hospital site not far from Bradford City Centre, the opportunity was seized to develop a major scheme specifically for younger disabled people which would be fully integrated as part of a 'prestigious' up-market owner-occupier housing estate. Hanover Housing Association had experience of extra care accommodation for elderly people and, although they had never developed a scheme for younger disabled people, were keen to work with Bradford Council on the initiative. From 1997 a Project Steering Group oversaw the development of the scheme in full consultation with the residents of Beechwood. Phase One of the scheme was finally ready for habitation in July 2001 and was officially opened by HRH Princess Anne in September of that year.

The remaining 26 residents of Beechwood all moved to Westwood Park, either to live in Eden Gardens (the extra care block of 20 self-contained flats), into one of the bungalows or a 'cluster unit' of self contained flats in a large bungalow style building. The staff team at Beechwood moved as well, effectively becoming a specialist home support team offering 24/7 care and support on the new scheme.

Four years on and 20 of the original 26 Beechwood residents remain, along with 31 other people with a wide range of physical 'impairments', some very severe. This is proof positive that extra care housing schemes of this kind are a realistic alternative to institutional care. A second phase of the scheme opened in February 2002 so that in total the whole scheme now comprises 50 units of fully accessible housing for disabled people comprising a mixture of two bedroomed bungalows, one-bedroom flats in 'cluster blocks' and 20 one-bedroom flats in an 'Extra Care' block. In addition to these 50 units there is a respite care cluster of 3 flats with a carer flat for staff.

Design features of the scheme include:

- Fully wheelchair accessible throughout, including extra-wide corridors
- Remote door entry to flats
- Provision of closi-mat toilets where needed
- Alarm call system
- Flats designed for easy installation of ceiling track hoists

Communal facilities include:

- Communal Lounges
- Restaurant proving freshly cooked meals daily
- Assisted Bathrooms
- Shop
- Therapy room

- Guest suite
- Staff offices, restroom and sleepover accommodation
- Laundry
- Mobility room for recharging wheelchairs
- Dog exercise area in grounds

Every person living on the scheme has an individually tailored package of care and support which is delivered by the on-site team. Hanover employ an estate manager who is also based on site and is able to deal with issues around rent, bills, housing maintenance etc. There is a joint allocations panel operated by Hanover HA and Bradford Council which considers every application and prioritises against an agreed set of criteria so that on the rare occasions that a unit becomes available there is no delay in offering it to the most suitable highest priority candidate.

Although the staff at Beechwood were confident that the scheme would work, even they were surprised at how dependency levels dropped once people moved out of residential care and started to exercise real choice in their lives. 'One lady' says Sheila Suddards (Scheme Manager), 'had moved to Beechwood following a stroke. She had poor mobility and speech problems and needed quite a high degree of care. When she moved to the new scheme into a flat, after a very short time she was able to manage all her own personal care tasks. Staff worked with her on budgeting skills and household tasks. She was accompanied and assisted with purchasing shopping. After a while she became confident enough to go to the shops by herself. After working closely with Occupational Therapy and support staff, and purchasing the necessary equipment, she was able to prepare her own meals. She is now virtually independent in her own home and only uses the support staff through the on-call system in an emergency.'

The scheme has consistently achieved 100% occupancy rates with a long waiting list of those wishing to move in. Peter Kay (Head of Adult Services) puts the success of the scheme down to a number of factors. 'We involved disabled people, their families and the local community right from the start to ensure that we got both the concept and the detailed design right; our project team was informal and fun, yet at the same time businesslike; we worked hard to ensure that the staff and residents were well prepared for the move; and we didn't allow the inevitable obstacles and delays to discourage us. Most importantly the scheme is located in an excellent setting fully integrated with the surrounding housing.'

(1,183 words)

## References:

1. Independence, Well-being and Choice: Vision for the Future of Social Care for Adults in England. Department of Health March 2005.
2. Independence, Well-being and Choice — The ADSS response to the Green Paper on Adult Social Care July 2005 <http://www.adss.org.uk/publications/consresp/2005/independdetail.pdf>

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## Other Housing LIN publications available in this format:

<u>Factsheet no.1:</u>	<b>Extra Care Housing - What is it?</b>
<u>Factsheet no.2:</u>	<b>Commissioning and Funding Extra Care Housing</b>
<u>Factsheet no.3:</u>	<b>New Provisions for Older People with Learning Disabilities</b>
<u>Factsheet no.4:</u>	<b>Models of Extra Care Housing and Retirement Communities</b>
<u>Factsheet no.5:</u>	<b>Assistive Technology in Extra Care Housing</b>
<u>Factsheet no.6:</u>	<b>Design Principles for Extra Care</b>
<u>Factsheet no.7:</u>	<b>Private Sector Provision of Extra Care Housing</b>
<u>Factsheet no.8:</u>	<b>User Involvement in Extra Care Housing</b>
<u>Factsheet no.9:</u>	<b>Workforce Issues in Extra Care Housing</b>
<u>Factsheet no.10:</u>	<b>Refurbishing or remodelling sheltered housing: a checklist for developing Extra Care</b>
<u>Factsheet no.11:</u>	<b>An Introduction to Extra Care Housing and Intermediate Care</b>
<u>Factsheet no.12:</u>	<b>An Introduction to Extra Care Housing in Rural Areas</b>
<u>Factsheet no.13:</u>	<b>Eco Housing: Taking Extra Care with environmentally friendly design</b>
<u>Factsheet no 14:</u>	<b>Supporting People with Dementia in Extra Care Housing: an introduction to the the issues</b>
<u>Factsheet no 15:</u>	<b>Extra Care Housing Options for Older People with Functional Mental Health Problems</b>
<u>Factsheet no 16:</u>	<b>Extra Care Housing Models and Older Homeless people</b>
<u>Factsheet no.17:</u>	<b>The Potential for Independent Care Home Providers to Develop Extra Care Housing</b>
<u>Case Study Report:</u>	<b>Achieving Success in the Development of Extra Care Schemes for Older People</b>
<u>Technical Brief no.1</u>	<b>Care in Extra Care Housing</b>
<u>Technical Brief no.2</u>	<b>Funding Extra Care Housing</b>
<u>Technical Brief no.3</u>	<b>Mixed Tenure in Extra Care Housing</b>
<u>Viewpoint no.1</u>	<b>The Challenge of Providing Extra Care Housing for People with Dementia</b>
<u>Viewpoint no.2</u>	<b>Tenancy Issues: Surviving Partners in Extra Care Housing</b>
<u>Viewpoint no.3</u>	<b>Moving towards a Home-owning Democracy</b>
<u>Viewpoint no.4</u>	<b>Extra Care Housing is not the Answer for Everyone with Dementia</b>

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