**HOUSING LIN EASTERN REGION MEETING IPSWICH 30TH JUNE 2017**

**THE FUTURE FOR SHELTERED HOUSING – DOES IT HAVE ONE??**

The Housing Learning and Improvement Network has received an increasing number of requests form authorities looking to review their sheltered housing stock and what to do next. Many schemes are well loved and respected in their community but require investment and guaranteed long term revenue funding to be viable. Local authority funding has been drastically reduced, or even completely stopped. Central government policy will potentially undermine the sector. Yet the increasing number of older people with support needs who would benefit from a suitable affordable home with access to readily available support and care continues to grow. The benefits to communities and also health and social care are well documented. New innovative solutions are required.

The Eastern Housing LN meeting presentations by Sue Ramsden and Helen Rowbottom from the NHF and Paul Kingston from Orwell Housing provided the delegates with an excellent summary of the national and local sheltered housing situation. The link below provides access to then presentations

<https://www.housinglin.org.uk/Events/Eastern-Region-Housing-LIN-Meeting-Ipswich/>

Following the presentations a round table discussion looked to take the issues raised forward. The summary points from these discussions are highlighted below.

**What services and systems are needed to better integrate sheltered housing and health ?**

* Improve understanding across both sectors
* Work together to provide support to the acute sector
* Coproduce services from the ground up
* When retrofitting include health needs
* Make sure that people and partnerships are given the time and opportunity to develop
* Provide link roles to improve communication and timely decision making
* Recognise that the number of housing associations causes health and social care communication issues
* Future proof services by linking into strategic plans, eg STPs
* Can virtual monitoring bring improved targeting of scarce resources
* Joint business case development across health and housing teams
* Learn from and disseminate best practice
* Data sharing protocols essential
* Reduce processes and streamline decision making

**Which key messages should we be highlighting to local and national politicians?**

* Homes are for living
* Right offer required for 21st century
* One size does not fit all
* Emotional and social benefit of sheltered housing to be emphasised
* Provide local examples of what works well
* New innovations required eg Intergenerational Living
* Educate the decision makers – local politicians to receive local message
* Take the politics out of housing.
* Remove the uncertainty of political change
* Think BIG
* Benefits not only preventative
* Social costs and impact as well as cash savings
* Public Awareness campaign to be coordinated
* Coproduce policies
* Realism required as to what can be achieved.

**How can we meet different tenants’ expectations as the tenant profile changes?**

* Flexible and contemporary design
* Futureproof designs
* Good planned maintenance which tenants are aware of
* Service level agreements to keep to task
* Research and understand tenants needs and expectations
* Embrace digital technology and communication
* Promote choice and banding of service offer
* Monitor compatibility of tenants as scheme profile changes
* Encourage community development and mutual benefit as scheme age mix and needs change
* Build relationships within schemes and the wider community
* Improve image and brand of the sector
* Embrace diversity

The excellent contributions could have continued for much longer than the time allocated. For the Housing Lin the message was clear. Sheltered housing does have a future but requires investment and new methods of service delivery.

The Eastern Region link is willing to coordinate further links to best practice if there is sufficient interest from members. Please contact Dan on danielgaul2@gmail.com if you would like to be involved. The region could produce a summary of case studies from across our area if there is sufficient response.

The Housing LIN is aware of particular interest from around the country of supporting older people in specific accommodation designed to HAPPI standards in general needs housing developments. This is of particular interest in rural areas but also major towns were older people want to retain local neighbourhood links and networks. We hope to develop these opportunities further over the next twelve months. Any authorities or housing associations interested in taking part please do get in touch.

Thanks again for your contributions.

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Housing Lin Eastern Lead.

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