A5 Developing an accommodation strategy

Many local authorities will already have older person's accommodation strategies; for some this will be part of a wider older person's or adult social care document, for others it may be in the form of a market position statement. The purpose of an accommodation strategy in this context is to describe the role that accommodation performs in delivering care and support. This may encompass the future role of residential care, of extra care and sheltered housing and housing support services, such as care and repair or assistive technology. It is likely to straddle both public and private sector housing. The material below offers a template for developing such a strategy.

Summary

This should give a summary of the overall strategy and the agreed approach over a particular time period. It should include the investment/disinvestment to be made over that period. It can be produced as a separate, short document, or as an 'executive summary' at the front of the strategy.

Introduction

The introduction states the purpose of the strategy and shared values and vision. It provides a brief picture of the range of accommodation and services under consideration and identifies the priorities and the outcomes that the strategy is trying to achieve. It may also contain a definition of commissioning. Often, there will be a brief description of how the strategy was developed, ie, the process or methodology undertaken and the partners who have agreed its content.

Legislation, national and local guidance

This should bring together requirements that are either advised or mandatory for the organisations developing the strategy, together with statements about organisational goals and values where they have a bearing on the strategies development.

Demand forecasting

This should contain the analysis from a broad-based review of demographics, research, surveys of relevant populations (both national and local), surveys of user, carer and patient needs and the key aspects of conditional demand to be addressed, ie, known unresolved needs of the population. It should conclude by identifying the target groups for different types of accommodation provision and the needs this will fulfil. This might include defining who residential care is for as well as who the authority thinks it is not for, and the role that assistive technology might perform.

Supply analysis

This has a number of components, which build to present a picture of existing services and their use as well as a wider picture of the market and an assessment of current gaps in service availability or performance.

- A 'map' of accommodation – where is specialist accommodation (residential care,

supported housing, extra care, retirement villages) currently located. If in local authority or Registered Social Landlord ownership, what is its value and state of repair? With regard to sheltered housing and care homes it should estimate their future fitness for purpose in terms of: future suitability and viability as extra care housing provision; their capacity to meet regulatory requirements in the case of care homes; current and likely future demand; and any service or scheme improvements.

- **A 'map' of relevant services –** including the full range of services being provided, showing where services relevant to extra care housing are located and the organisation providing them.

- **Service quantity –** is there known under- or over-supply of services? This section may include information on referral and assessment mechanisms, take-up of services, occupancy/vacancy levels, effectiveness/outcomes of services and waiting times.

- **Service performance –** whether services are meeting needs fully or partially. To be gained from; inspection reports, performance indicators, service user and carer views relating to the relevance and quality of care through the analysis of complaints, and information derived from user/carer forums and feedback from the contract monitoring process.

- **Contracting –** the contractual arrangement in place and any strengths and/or weaknesses in these arrangements.

- **Finance and funding –** a picture of the financial resources available now and potentially over the period of the strategy. Some strategies include a survey of costs and charges and show comparisons with neighbouring or equivalent authorities.

- **The market (if a separate market position statement is not being developed) –** what are the current and future trends in provision? The analysis could also include an assessment of land or house prices and their impact on the market, as well as an assessment of the robustness and capacity of the independent and voluntary sector.

This section may include known plans of service providers and any local consultation that has taken place.

Gap analysis and the design of future provision

This section is the hub of the strategy. It brings the demand and supply material together, analyses obvious shortfalls in provision now and in the future and how such gaps may be met, together with a view of the capital and revenue resources required and how they may be funded. It should spell out the shape of future services and the strategic priorities necessary to achieve them within the time-frame of the strategy, and appraise the options available, including risks.

Monitoring arrangements

This section has two purposes:

- To make clear how the strategy will be monitored in order to determine whether the strategy is shaping services in the way intended.

- To guide the development of monitoring of accommodation provision and services in the future.

In terms of the latter, it may be appropriate to include an assessment of the effectiveness of current monitoring and performance management arrangements, if changes to the systems are necessary. It is important to recognise that monitoring and the collection and analysis of data has a cost consequence for both commissioners and providers and this should be carefully considered in designing new systems.

Action Plan

A brief, snappy, review of the agreed next steps and whose responsibility it is to take these forward.