

# HSU



STRATEGIC INNOVATION & PEER LEARNING  
*In housing, health, care and support*

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# APPENDIX A

# CORE SCRIPT

**TRANSFORMING SERVICES: MEETING OUR HOUSING, CARE,  
SUPPORT NEEDS IN THE SOUTH WEST**



## 1 INTRODUCTION

The South West Housing Learning and Improvement Network's (LIN) report "Putting Older People First in the South West"<sup>1</sup> identifies a range of urgent issues facing the region to develop housing options for older, vulnerable people over the next 15-20 years:

- 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 outline sets out the context, aims and approach that the SW Housing LIN and partner agencies will pursue to support delivery of improved housing options for older, vulnerable people in the South West. In particular, it explains the case for a dedicated Housing Support Unit to enable SW authorities develop their strategic plans and operational capacity.

## 2 CONTEXT

In recent years, both local and national government has increasingly come to recognise the importance and implications of the growth in the population aged over 65. Current national policy supports two twin themes. Firstly to increase the supply of accommodation available for older people through regulation (in terms of the development of new building to lifetime homes standards); while maximising the housing options across tenure and property types, to support independent living and access to appropriate services where needed, for example, through support for the development of extra care housing.

The second plank of policy through care (and increasingly through integrating health and social care to transform community services) is to develop the government's personalisation agenda. Supported by an inter-departmental protocol, 'Putting People First', this aims to transform social care in particular, through giving people greater choice and control over services and funding.

In the South West, there are already a higher proportion of older people than in any other English region, and that trend is only likely to continue in coming years. The growth in the oldest population will also be matched by a diminution in the proportion of people in early middle age.

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<sup>1</sup> Putting Older People First, Housing LIN, (2008).  
<http://www.dhcarenetworks.org.uk/IndependentLivingChoices/Housing/Topics/type/resource/?cid=4775>

Key demographic facts include:

- The highest proportion of older people in any English region, with the number of people aged 85 and above projected to increase by more than 57% between 2008 and 2025.
- 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 alone.
- A projected increase of 49% in the number of older people with dementia between 2008 and 2025 which will have a major impact on the demand for specialist accommodation and support.
- Growth in the diversity of older people requiring specialist provision, for example, people with learning disabilities, mental health and alcohol problems.
- Over-representation of older people in rural areas where access to services and other facilities is increasingly difficult.
- A decline in the proportion of younger age groups that are potential care providers.

### 3 “Putting Older People First in the South West” RECOMMENDATIONS

The key recommendations of the report that are relevant for housing providers and commissioners of care and support are set out below:

- a) **Better strategic planning:** 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. An implementation plan is also required to inform future planning as well as advising on inward public and private sector housing capital investment and associated housing, care and support revenue requirements.
- b) **Enhanced market information:** 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.
- c) **Improved customer engagement:** appropriate mechanisms to engage with a wide variety of housing, care and support stakeholders in the region are required
- d) **Effective use of resources:** regional bodies need to urgently promote reviews of current sheltered housing stock and facilitate appropriate action to use this valuable asset most effectively.
- e) **Enabling preventive services:** local authority commissioners need to plan for the expansion of Home Improvement Agencies, Disabled Facilities Grants, Telecare and assistive technology, Warmfront, information and advice.
- f) **Maximising choice:** regional agencies and local housing authorities need to support an expansion of the housing options available to older people and floating support services, including for those with dementia and mental health problems

- g) **Managing risk and innovation:** create an environment where risks are fully explored and innovation is not stifled.

## 4 CONCLUSION

The 'Putting People First in the South West' report has been very successful in raising awareness around planning for the needs and aspirations of an ageing population. To date though, there is a view that despite the available evidence, information and toolkits, South West authorities have not universally adopted a strategic approach to the planning and delivery of housing, care and support for older people.

## 5 NEXT STEPS

The SW Housing LIN now wishes to actively influence and support delivery of improved housing options by ensuring that “**Every local authority area has an informed plan for achieving better housing options for older, vulnerable people**”.

In addition to the context set out above, important emphasis is also provided by the need to consider the impact of:

- Delivery of the progress measures for the Transformation of Adult Social Care Services within the social care reform grant period and specifically the actions required by April 2010
- The focus on delivery of outcomes that Comprehensive Area Assessment will provide and the need to develop appropriate strategies for the ageing population
- The economic downturn, the need to drive out efficiencies and reduce reliance on residential care
- 'Total Place' and the implications for integration of Health and Adult Social Care strategic planning, policy implementation and service delivery

### Approach

To date the activity of the Housing LIN has primarily focused around raising awareness of issues and exchanging information, best practice and learning to support change in the delivery of housing, care and support services for older people.

There is now a firm commitment from the Housing LIN Leadership Set, supported and jointly funded by a consortium including the Government Office for the South West, South West Councils and the Regional Improvement and Efficiency Partnership, to **actively** support the delivery of improved housing, care and support options for older people in the SW, both now and in the future. This will involve:

- Developing a **Business Plan** incorporating a communications strategy, performance and success measures to ensure that future activity is focused and well understood

- Carrying out a **Market Assessment** in the SW to develop an understanding of the current activity and progress to inform;
- Developing the **Housing Support Unit** - this will provide practical support and assistance to authorities in developing an informed plan for achieving better housing options for older, vulnerable people.

### **Achieving meaningful outcomes**

To take the above forward, the SW Housing LIN Leadership Set have identified the following actions

- Develop a Business Plan and communications strategy (by end Sept)
- Market assessment and analysis (Survey out in September, final report in November)
- Clarify the resources available and the approach to be adopted
- Develop proposal for Housing Support Unit and prioritise authorities for early support (by end September)
- Establish a steering group to oversee this work (by end Sept)
- Consider the future role and responsibilities of the Housing LIN Leadership Set and Steering Group in the context of the approach set out in this outline

## **6 GETTING INVOLVED: HAVE YOUR SAY**

We would be interested to hear your opinions about the development of the Housing Support Unit and how you would like it to help you and your organisation/partnerships meet the housing, care and support needs of older, vulnerable people in your area.

We will also shortly be conducting a more detailed market analysis to develop a coherent business case for the Housing Support Unit. In the meantime, we welcome your initial views. Please email us at

[info.housing@dh.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:info.housing@dh.gsi.gov.uk)