



Personalisation

What's housing got
to do with it?

directors of
adass
adult social services

Housing Network

Acknowledgements

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Foreword

The transformation of care and support could be greatly accelerated if there was a better understanding of how housing and communities fit into the picture. We know that the places where people live, their homes and neighbourhoods, make up a huge part of people's experience and are central to well-being and requirements for care and support.

The purpose of the paper is to explore what personalisation looks like from the perspective of housing and communities, and to set this alongside the current focus on transforming care and support. It presents personalisation on a broad canvass providing a high level strategic overview. It accompanies another publication *Housing, health and care*¹, which sets a common local context for action for partners involved in these service areas.

The paper illustrates ways in which this is already being tackled and sets out some practical steps that can be taken to embrace housing and communities within programmes for personalisation. It explores some paradigm shifts that need to take place in relation to governance, finance and the workforce. Using a question-led approach, it seeks to bring local authority strategic commissioners – of housing, adult social services, and housing support – together around a common understanding of the lead roles they need to play, and suggests some ways in which providers of housing and of care and support might consciously reorganise their services around people's aspirations.

The shift from block commissioning to individual purchasing power is providing uncertainty for service providers. Diminishing public funds are in danger of reinforcing funding silos rather than allowing money to follow the individual. And there is the ongoing challenge of coordinating revenue and capital funds to meet the changing aspirations of individuals and communities.

The paper is being published at an interesting time in British politics. We have a new Conservative- Liberal Democratic Coalition Government that is committed to Building the Big Society² and many new faces in politics at the local as well as at the national level. This briefing paper is intended to assist:

- Commissioners – local authority chief executives, strategic housing, adult social care and supporting people teams
- Providers – mainstream and specialist housing providers

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¹*Housing, health and care, CIH and DH Housing Learning and Improvement Network, Dec 2009*

²*Big Society, Cabinet Office, May 2010*
<http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/media/407789/building-big-society.pdf>

1. Personalisation – what’s it all about?

The policy of Personalisation aims to give people greater choice and control over their lives and is at the heart of the long term, cross-party goal of public service transformation. It springs from the belief that people themselves ultimately know best how to make their lives work well and that public expectations have changed – people are less deferential than they were, even 20 years ago, and expect services to be tailored to their particular needs and aspirations.

In the UK, the focus for personalisation has, so far, been strongest in adult social care and support. The *Putting People First* vision³ of the last Government set out strong cross sector commitment for the personalisation programme and was a significant step towards delivering personalised care services, but has represented just one element of a much broader programme to transform public services across the piece.

The ‘Big Society’ public sector reform programme, as well as earlier reports from the Cabinet Office such as *Power in People’s Hands*⁴, support the principles of personalisation – to put more power and opportunity into people’s hands – principles that are seen as key to delivering responsive services that meet people’s demands and expectations in the 21st century.

Personalisation provides a way forward for maintaining, or even improving, the quality of public services in the current economic circumstances.

2011 was a good year for Jacqueline

It was the year that she moved into her own flat. Her personal assistant had helped her to find out about the housing options available to her through InfoHomes, the Council’s housing information and advice service. She fell in love with the two bed flat which, being on the 5th floor, has great views and is just 10 minutes walk away from where she works. She’d had the option to rent or to buy the flat with the help of an equity loan and a mortgage from the housing association, and at this stage she’d decided to rent.

When she moved in, the housing association offered to help Jacqueline to manage her finances. However, she prefers to do that with her Adult Social Care funded personal assistant who she knows well. They check the finances at their twice-weekly meeting. She has started cooking classes run by another specialist housing association nearby.

Jacqueline works 4 days a week in a gardening nursery, and is passionate about her job. She seems to have green fingers and, with a little help from the local Development Trust’s employment support officer, has learned many new skills. She sits on the Safeguarding Council that informs the Local Strategic Partnership in relation to its policy and performance on making the community a safe place for her and others to live in. The street-lighting has improved in the area as a result, which has made her more confident walking home alone when the evenings are dark. She sees her friends at a local community group regularly and hasn’t yet felt lonely living on her own.

Jacqueline sees her partner, Andrew, 2 or 3 times a week. Initially, she went to his place at the supported housing scheme where they both used to live, but he now spends more time at her flat and has grown to like the idea of being more self-sufficient. He has been using his cash allowance to learn to play the guitar and recently performed at an open-mike session with a band. They are planning for him to move into her flat later in the year, when he feels ready to move. They are talking to the Quick Response Support Service run by the Development Trust about the type and level of service that would help them to live independently as a couple.

³*Putting People First: A shared vision and commitment to the transformation of Adult Social Care, HM Government, Dec 2007*

http://www.dh.gov.uk/prod_consum_dh/groups/dh_digitalassets/@dh/@en/documents/digitalasset/dh_081119.pdf

⁴*Power in People’s Hands: Learning from the world’s best public services, Cabinet Office July 2009*

<http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/media/224869/world-class.pdf>

2. What does personalisation involve?

Giving people greater choice and control

Personalisation demands that organisations

1. give people greater levels of choice and control
2. set about delivering services that deliver the choices people make
3. continuously challenge themselves to go further in giving people choice and control

A power shift

Personalisation requires a shift in power from professionals to people and from providers to consumers, so that people and communities have greater choice and control over the services they receive, including more power to spend budgets in a way that best meets their needs and aspirations. They need good access to information and, where necessary, a good quality advocacy service to help them access information, to make suitable choices and to negotiate with professionals.

Done properly, such a shift in power can help people to navigate a path of their own choosing. They can meet their particular requirements at different times of their lives and can gain satisfaction from knowing that they have been making their own choices.

Better matching of services and investment to people's aspirations

The more people are allowed to self-select, the more information becomes available about what people really want. Where the market cannot meet these aspirations, it is necessary to support and shape a market so that services that meet people's aspirations become available. These new-style commissioning activities – collecting and interpreting information and actively shaping markets – present a huge challenge to local authorities. Section 4 provides some information about the nature of these market-shaping activities that should assist local authorities as they develop capacity in this area.

Devolution in decision-making

Personalisation can take a number of forms. A cash transfer and personal budgets are just two ways of delivering choice and control. This has been recognised by the Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG) in its decision to focus on 'wrap around' services and person-centred support plans, rather than solely pursue a focus on personal budgets.

Personalisation could be understood as an integral part of devolution – in which power to make decisions and spend money is devolved as to the lowest level that is. Activities that impact on a group of people or community, such as regeneration, require the collective engagement of that community. This means being able to influence decisions that will affect the way the community works – so that places, and the activities and services available, are shaped around the people that live in them.

A recent New Local Government Network report⁵ suggests that there are a number of levels involved in personalisation. The table below sets these out and provides examples relating to housing and communities.

⁵*People Power: how can we personalise public services? New Local Government Network, Mar 2009*
<http://www.nlgn.org.uk/public/2009/people-power-how-can-we-personalise-public-services>

Level of personalisation communities	Associated with ...	Examples – housing and
Individual level	... individual budgets, wrap around services and choices that provide flexibility in services provided	Choice-based lettings Self-Directed Support
Collective level (interest groups)	... group purchasing	Co-housing where a group of older people buy or rent a home together
Collective level (geographical)	... localism, place-shaping, where people living in a place can influence what happens in their locality	Community governance models that drive community safety or regeneration programmes
Universal level	... inclusivity and information services that help people to make decisions	Safeguarding Lifetime homes and neighbourhoods, Housing options/advice service

A positive framework for optimising use of resources

Personalisation doesn't automatically result in cost-savings and should not be seen primarily as a vehicle for reducing costs.

However, poor matching of services to individuals can be wasteful – it means that some people receive a service they don't necessarily need or want. Done well, personalisation can direct limited public funds to the right people at the right levels, because it allows better matching of consumer aspirations with services. The administrative costs associated with making distinct service offers to each individual are significant and must be taken into account. They include set up costs such as those invested in designing and setting up systems, such as IT and invoicing systems, and training of the workforce, as well as ongoing costs such as helping people to make choices, monitoring and reviewing.

Bringing housing more centrally into the picture can provide additional options that are often less expensive than traditional options. A recent evaluation for Partnerships for Older People Projects (POPPs) shows that a range of projects to reduce social isolation and hospital stays both improves quality of life and reduces costs⁶. And a new guide on commissioning and shaping services demonstrates the cost-effectiveness of preventative and housing-based services compared with residential care, especially for older people⁷. As a result, councils are encouraged to focus more of their resources on preventing the need for residential care and less on residential care itself.

⁶*The National Evaluation of Partnerships for Older People Projects, Personal Social Services Research Unit (PSSRU) for Dept of Health, Jan 2010*

http://www.dh.gov.uk/prod_consum_dh/groups/dh_digitalassets/@dh/@en/@ps/documents/digitalasset/dh_111213.pdf

⁷*Use of resources in adult social care: A guide for local authorities, Dept of Health*

www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/DH_107596

3. Personalisation in housing and communities

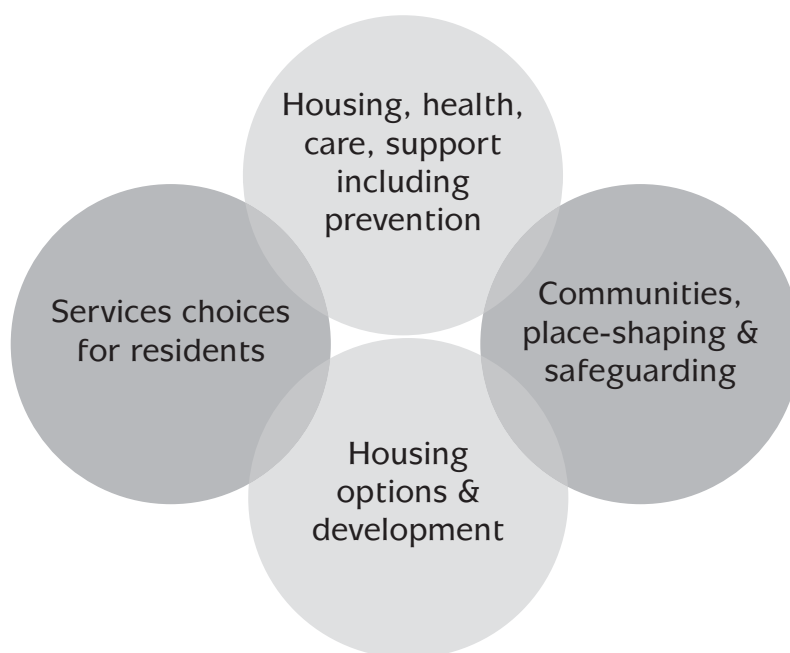
The principles of personalisation are not systematically embedded in the policies and practices of mainstream housing providers, local authority housing providers or of strategic housing authorities. Strands of housing policy and practice are, however, increasingly allowing and encouraging customers to exercise choice and control, such as:

- Choice-based lettings – an accepted means of matching individuals' aspirations with the housing available
- The new focus on outcomes for tenants and tenant scrutiny, including the Local Offer, within the Tenant Services Authority's new regulatory system for all social housing tenants⁸
- A range of financing options from full rent to full purchase
- An increased focus on 'customer insight' and developing service menus
- Accessible information and advice on housing options to support greater choice
- Tenant Management Organisations, Commonhold and Community Land Trusts – providing collective choice for ownership and management
- Flexible and person-centred housing related support for people regardless of where they live

Four service areas

Breaking the housing and community service offer down into four service areas allows personalisation to be understood differently in different circumstances. The four areas are

1. Housing, health, care, support including prevention
2. Communities, place-shaping and safeguarding
3. Housing options and development
4. Service choices for residents



⁸The Regulatory Framework for Social Housing in England, Tenant Services Authority, 2010
<http://www.tenantservicesauthority.org/server/show/ConWebDoc.20175>

Organisations – whether strategic commissioners or service providers – that commit to the ethos of personalisation across all four service elements will serve all of their citizens better. Specifically, they will serve their more vulnerable clients in a more inclusive way than those who focus only on the vulnerabilities of their customers. The benefits to vulnerable people and to adult social services departments, which deal with more acute needs, are pointed out.

Service Area 1: Housing, health, care, support including prevention

Housing and housing support are integral elements of an individual's care and support. They can also play a major role both in preventing situations from deteriorating and in delivering speedy and sustainable responses to crises. DCLG has emphasised the contribution of Supporting People to early intervention and prevention services and how the Quality Assessment Framework and individual support plans demonstrate that some services are already flexible and person centred⁹. Working with people as individuals has increased their likelihood of finding settled accommodation solutions, and this has had a measurable impact on the number of homeless people and people living in bed and breakfast accommodation.

Steps towards personalisation in this service area might include:

- **GREATER** differentiation of housing options for vulnerable people
- **CHOICE OVER** home improvements and adaptations
- **BETTER INTEGRATION** of housing, support, care and health to allow mixing and matching of services
- **INTEGRATED** packages, such as supported and extra-care housing, as a choice
- **ASSISTING** vulnerable young people to make informed housing and support choices on their route to independence
- **EXPLORING** housing financing and other options with home owners who have been made redundant
- **WORKING** with the police to stop anti-social behaviour especially where it stops vulnerable tenants enjoying their tenancies

People can be helped to thrive by finding appropriate settled housing solutions as their circumstances change, and having more scope to live independently.

If people are generally more settled and under less stress, suitable solutions that support independent living and are less expensive than residential care options can often be found.



⁹Government Response to the House of Commons Communities and Local Government Select Committee Report into the Supporting People Programme, Jan 2010
<http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/housing/responsecommitteespprogramme?view=Standard>

Personalising budgets and care in a supported housing scheme: Look Ahead Housing and Care in partnership with LB Tower Hamlets

These two organisations have developed personalised services in a high support scheme for people with serious mental health issues – The Coventry Road Scheme.

Initially, they found many reasons why their proposed model might not work, most of which involved professionals' perceptions of how their customers might behave given choice and control. These fears have not been borne out. In fact, customers have designed their support with thought and insight and have gained confidence and an investment in their future through having greater control of their lives. Accountability of both services providers and of customers for how they spend their cash allocation is built into the system by using and signing off individual customer plans.

Three funding streams have been created:

1. **Core (74%)** – 2 staff on shift and on site at any time – because Coventry Road needs to remain high support for people with severe, enduring and complex mental health needs
2. **Flexi-support (18%)** – 3.5 hours of one to one support per customer per week over and above core time, delivered at a time the customer chooses in order to help achieve outcomes in their personalised plans
3. **Cash (8%)** – £40 per customer per week. No customer has chosen to purchase traditional forms of support such as personal assistants and support work. The allocation can be saved up over a number of weeks to make a bigger purchase, as long as this is signed off in their personal plan. Items purchased include CDs, a meal out, new trainers, a visit to a city farm, art materials, taxis.

When asked in March 2009 how she could increase control in her life, one customer said 'I don't know what other choices I could make'. When asked again in November 2009, she answered 'I make the decisions and I tell staff'.

Another customer said 'I have a focus in my life. Something to look forward to and get excited about'

http://www.lookahead.org.uk/Site/23/Documents/Look%20Ahead%20Personalisation_Report.pdf

Service Area 2: Communities, place-shaping and safeguarding

Changes to investment programmes, and new measures around involvement, are starting to deliver a new focus on 'place'. The Homes and Communities Agency's Single Conversation and Local Investment Planning process¹⁰ is re-focusing housing investment so that decisions are made in the context of other capital investment being made in a place, and the Duty to Involve¹¹ is ensuring that communities are increasingly involved in developing the long-term local vision. The Total Place¹², and Total Capital, initiatives are similarly geared to identifying the totality of resources available in a particular area and to redesigning the planning and delivery of services, in order to achieve better outcomes for all citizens from the bottom up.

At the same time, some housing providers and local strategic partnerships are taking a significant role in safeguarding adults¹³. The Dept of Health, Home Office and Criminal Justice System are taking steps to strengthen this role in safeguarding partnerships and to enhance the role of safeguarding boards in hearing the voice of the local citizen. New guidance will look at ways that citizens can be supported to keep themselves safe, and the roles housing providers and commissioners might play in assisting them to do so.

¹⁰Single Conversation, Local Investment Plans, Local Investment Agreements, Homes and Communities Agency
<http://www.homesandcommunities.co.uk/singleconversation.htm>

¹¹Duty to Involve <http://www.idea.gov.uk/idk/core/page.do?pageId=15391881>

¹²Total Place: Better for less <http://www.localleadership.gov.uk/totalplace>

¹³Safeguarding Adults: Report on the consultation on the review of 'No Secrets'
www.dh.gov.uk/en/Consultations/Responsestoconsultations/DH_102764

Steps towards personalisation in this service area might include:

- **THE DEVELOPMENT** of neighbourhood engagement arrangements tied into high level strategic decision-making and scrutiny arrangements, enabling a two-way conversation between neighbourhoods and local decision-makers
- **A COMMITMENT** to creating inclusive neighbourhoods – planning for Lifetime Neighbourhoods¹⁴, place-management, crime and anti-social behaviour management and promoting social cohesion.
- **INVOLVEMENT** in Local Safeguarding Boards and development of organisational safeguarding strategies
- **THE DEVELOPMENT** of the market in 'community services' – such as financial inclusion, good neighbour services, and integrated parent and toddler facilities.

Vulnerable people are helped to thrive within a safer, more inclusive neighbourhood that caters for their particular needs and aspirations and helps them to keep themselves safe

Adult social care benefits because neighbourhoods are designed to meet the changing needs and circumstances of all individuals, and vulnerable people are empowered to look after themselves within more inclusive communities

Service Area 3: Housing options and development

People change their housing circumstances from time to time, often coinciding with other changes in their lives such as the birth of a child, bereavement of a partner or loss of mobility. These change-points are times when people are more focused on making choices and where personalisation can help them to achieve better solutions. Older people are often faced with the need to change their housing circumstances in periods of acute needs and when they feel most vulnerable. They can benefit from support to make the most appropriate choice, not just to meet their immediate needs but also in considering how their needs and capabilities may change in the future.

Steps towards personalisation in this service area might include:

- **ALL COUNCILS** developing a housing options service embracing choice-based lettings, full purchase, shared ownership, private renting, social renting, various specialised housing options for people with support needs.
- **'SURGERIES'** in local prisons to work out appropriate housing and support to individuals on release day.
- **PLANNING** for an increased range of housing options available in all localities – the right types, sizes, tenures and affordability of new homes
- **OFFERING** flexible financial packages for home purchase and/or rent
- **PROVIDING** tenancy support to people who need support to live in mainstream housing, perhaps because of a learning disability.

Vulnerable people are helped to thrive because, as citizens, they're offered more choice and support to live safely in accommodation and more information to help to access housing that suits them throughout their lives.

Adult social care benefits because people who are more settled in their accommodation are frequently more settled in other areas of their lives and therefore need lower levels of support.

¹⁴*Lifetime Homes, Lifetime Neighbourhoods, Communities and Local Government, Dec 2008*
<http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/housing/housingageingsociety>

Flexible Home Financing – Places for People and Advance Housing

Places for People offers a range of financing options that people can draw on to pay for their home.

The financial arrangement (whether rented, shared ownership or full ownership) does not depend on how the home was originally financed, as is usually the case. Instead, people choose the home they want to live in and *Places for People* assesses their financing options with them, advising them about the pros and cons and helping them to make their decision. The options available will depend on factors such as income, job security and credit status.

There are also options to staircase up and down, moving between renting, shared ownership and full ownership as their circumstances allow.

Advance Housing is assisting people with learning disabilities and mental health problems to buy their own homes through its shared ownership schemes **SOLD** and **Own Home**.

Grant funding or family finance is used. Where families are supporting the purchase, these funds may be from equity release on their own property, savings or a discretionary trust for a disabled son, daughter, brother or sister as an equity loan. This loan is repaid to the family or trust at the point when the Shared Ownership property is no longer needed and is sold.

For both family and grant funded options, the steps are:

1. Clients choose the property they want
2. *Advance Housing* buys the property
3. *Advance Housing* applies for grant funding or uses an equity loan from the family. A start up cost – of between £3,000 and £9,000 – is paid for by the client or family
4. The mortgage for the applicant's share, a maximum of up to £125,000, is paid by income support benefits
5. *Advance Housing* owns the remaining share and charges rent and a service charge on that part, usually covered by Housing Benefit

Service Area 4: Service choices for residents

The more providers understand their customers and potential customers, the better able they are to diversify their offer – potentially providing menus of services from which individual tenants and other residents can choose.

Steps towards personalisation in this service area might include:

- **LANDLORDS** setting up systems to gain insight into the preferences and behaviours of their tenants and other customers
- **THE DEVELOPMENT** of service menus that allow residents to make individual and collective choices in relation to housing and other services that they receive.
- **THE EXPANSION** of services to other residents, such as home owners and private renters, living nearby

Vulnerable people are helped to thrive because housing providers are flexible and responsive in relation to the services they offer both their own tenants and other residents

Adult social care benefits because more of their clients' needs and aspirations can be met by housing providers – as landlords and as agents of service delivery within their communities

4. The local authority role: leadership and strategic commissioning

Effective personalisation requires a clear lead from local authorities as strategic leads for places. There is an added complexity to this in two tier areas where a special effort to engage all partners needs to be made.

A good commissioning authority places purchasing power in the hands of individuals and communities through, for example, personal budgets, participatory budgeting, top-slicing mainstream budgets and through investing in line with a community vision. They use this as a lever for further change.

Moving away from Block Commissioning – Medway Council

Medway Council has started a large pilot to change radically the framework through which the local authority commissions and through which people make decisions – devolving purchasing power for both housing and non-housing support services to individuals.

They have made a distinction between people with persistent vulnerabilities – where the root cause is not going to go away – and people with temporary vulnerabilities. They have also been clear that the services people receive in the future will not necessarily stay the same for either group. This is to change the perception that people with persistent vulnerabilities will continue to need or to receive the same service, or a higher level service, in the long-term – their needs and aspirations may change.

Block commissioning of services is coming to an end. Instead, the people using the services will be eligible to receive Personal Housing Support Grant (PHSG), which is a non-statutory payment. The PHSG is paid 4-weekly. Individuals can choose whether they

- **RECEIVE** a direct payment – cash paid into designated bank account
- **NOMINATE** a 'principle provider' – to receive the money for them and help them spend it
- **HAVE A LOCAL** credit card (the Medway Card) – allowing people to make payments directly without having the hassle of using cash

Medway understands that changing the commissioning framework overnight will not change people's circumstances overnight. Most people are expected initially to continue to appoint their current providers to provide the same services as they do now. Over time, they are taking steps to change the culture of commissioning in order to create movement in the system by

- **MAKING** it clear to people that there is no statutory entitlement to the grant
- **PERSUADING** people to think more imaginatively about the nature of the services they want
- **UNDERTAKING** regular reviews with people receiving grant
- **CHANGING** the level of grant based on those reviews

Good commissioning authorities also:

- **IDENTIFY** the aspirations of people making up a community now and in the future – providing market information that assists providers to assess risk and make business decisions
- **BUILD** a vision together with citizens and partners, that understands the centrality of housing and the people who live in it as the fundamental building block of communities, and that transforms services, strengthens inclusion and develops places – also providing some certainty for providers by declaring their strategic intent
- **SHAPE** markets particularly where the free market is not capable of providing relevant services – stimulating markets to address gaps, and brokering to reduce overlaps to create an environment of choice, in line with aspirations

- **INVEST** strategically – to deliver preventative services, manage change, and achieve transformation of places in line with the local vision

Strategic commissioning activities will be very different in each of the four service areas. For example, making the right planning decisions in order to increase the housing choices available for a particular community is a very different commissioning activity from that involved in delivering personalised care services.

Tables 1-4 list some activities that might be involved in commissioning in respect of each of the service areas.

Table 1

Strategic Commissioning for Service Area 1: Housing, health, care, support including prevention	
Identifying aspirations	<p>Include the full range of housing options in Self-Directed Support (SDS) – such as adaptations, home improvement, assistive technology, handyperson services, co-housing options, sheltered housing, different tenure and house type options – and encourage people to choose ‘off menu’ options</p> <p>Put systems in place to explore and understand the preferences and aspirations of people facing difficulties or transition in their lives – at the point at which they need assistance</p>
Building a vision	<p>Share information from SDS reviews with the LA, and use it alongside other research information (such as the Housing Market Assessment, Supporting People needs-mapping, Adult social care needs-mapping and Joint Strategic Needs Assessment) to build long term plans for housing and housing services.</p> <p>Engage people who have previously used prevention services in creating options for people in similar situations to themselves in the future</p>
Shaping markets	<p>Actively shape the advocacy market, the housing market, the support market and care market – in line with evidenced aspiration – including providing business support for relevant new providers who could fill a gap in service provision</p> <p>Identify strategic partners – ie. providers that are responding to the evidence and vision by providing services in line with the long term plan and that are providing choice and control</p> <p>Require contractors of preventative services to deliver relevant choices, by including this requirement in tendering processes</p>
Investing strategically	<p>Prioritise investment (from housing, adult social care, health, other) to create choice and fill gaps in service provision – in line with evidenced aspirations</p> <p>Consider the right mix of personal budgets and block-commissioned services for assisting people through a life-transition or crisis point</p>

Table 2

Service Area 2: Strategic commissioning for communities, place-shaping and safeguarding	
Identifying aspirations	Build on existing local structures and mechanisms to engage citizens in an ongoing, iterative conversation about the high level strategic plans for the places where they live and how they see their neighbourhood developing to contribute to the overall vision – to inform the vision
Building a vision	<p>Create a unique long-term (20 year) vision that supports local ambitions for the place, together with LAs, citizens and partners, and for individual neighbourhoods that make up the place – led by the Local Strategic Partnerships.</p> <p>Adopt the principles of inclusive neighbourhoods and safeguarding within the vision</p> <p>Constantly update the vision and use it to update the Sustainable Communities Strategy, other core strategies such as economic development, transport, housing, and the Local Development Framework</p>
Shaping markets	<p>LAs and partners (existing and new) develop arrangements for partnership working and work together to provide the range of community services required, and activities that support safeguarding</p> <p>Actively ‘manage’ the development process so that developers/contractors carry out housing and regeneration activities in line with the community’s vision for the place</p>
Investing strategically	Invest public money and resources in line with its vision and strategy for the place – making it clear that investing in line with local priorities is a route to accessing public funds

Table 3

Service Area 3: Strategic commissioning for housing options and development	
Identifying aspirations	Draw on a wide range of information to understand people’s aspirations in relating to housing – including Self-Directed Support conversations
Building a vision	Generate a vision for enhancing accessibility to housing in all localities – including information and advice, new homes, better use of existing homes, extra-care, supported and independent living options – in line with aspirations
Shaping markets	<p>Establish a comprehensive housing information/advice/options service</p> <p>Actively work with private and registered providers to ensure that what is built meets aspirations and will help to achieve the local vision – now and in the future</p>
Investing strategically	<p>Only support bids for public resources (NAHP, LA New Build etc) that fit local priorities</p> <p>Use planning powers to avoid housing development that is not in line with the strategic vision for a place</p>

Table 4

Service Area 4: Strategic commissioning for service choices for tenants	
Identifying aspirations	<p>Encourage providers to develop their approaches to gaining insight into the preferences and aspirations of their customers – including their tenants and other citizens</p> <p>Facilitate information sharing locally and to build a picture of individuals' aspirations</p>
Building a vision	Develop a shared vision – between the LA, providers and residents – for services choices
Shaping markets	<p>Support the development of Local Offers with registered providers</p> <p>Identify gaps and facilitate the development of shared services between providers where appropriate to meet residents' aspirations and value for money</p>
Investing strategically	<p>Reward housing providers that are developing customer insight and menus of services by prioritising them for relevant grant funding</p> <p>Invest to fill gaps in service provision</p>



5. Housing providers' response: offering people what they want

Placing purchasing power in the hands of individuals and communities will require housing providers to take further steps to becoming 'inclusive businesses':

- On the one hand, pressures on public spending will require providers receiving public money to increase their levels of cooperation locally with councils and other partners, to develop preventative services, to avoid unhelpful competition by negotiating roles, and to fill gaps – so that their business model, strategic direction and range of activities contributes to the overall tapestry of provision in particular localities.
- On the other hand, they will be expected to behave like commercial outfits – understanding the local and national operating context, understanding the aspirations of their existing and potential customers, segmenting local markets, identifying their Unique Selling Point and capacity for development and growth, positioning themselves within the broad market-place and competing for business.

These two drivers are not mutually exclusive and housing providers have been developing their business planning capabilities in relation both over a significant period.

Broadly, the activities that housing providers need to undertake on an ongoing basis in order to embrace personalisation are:

- **REVIEW**, from a business perspective, the roles they would like to play in each locality in which they operate – across the four service areas (i) housing, health, care, support including prevention (ii) communities, place-shaping and safeguarding (iii) housing options and development (iv) service choices for tenants
- **SET UP** appropriate systems to collect information about individual tenants' aspirations on an ongoing basis, including through workforce contact with customers – and undertake market research, embracing both existing and potential customers
- **WORK WITH** councils and other partners locally (i) sharing information on local aspirations (ii) communicating their offer, (iii) negotiating the key local roles they will play in a locality alongside others (iv) preventing people's situations from worsening.
- **FLAG UP** to each council any conditions of supplying a service – eg. the minimum and maximum number for customers for the service to be viable and effective
- **CONSIDER** sharing services with other service providers – where one organisation can deliver a particular service in a locality more appropriately
- **BUILD** menus of services that each resident can buy from the provider on an individual basis – working out how to charge for this
- **CONSIDER** how to market themselves and to gain feedback on the services they deliver
- **DEVELOP** their workforce to enable and empower them to develop their role and deliver effectively – and to manage the uncertainty that comes with more flexible and responsive service delivery
- **TO UNDERSTAND** their responsibilities relating to risk and safeguarding and to act accordingly

In a diverse market, consumers need good quality, accurate information about the nature of services on offer. How providers present themselves will be critical. Those that are more open to challenge – that invite, publish and respond to feedback from existing customers – will have greater credibility in the long-run.

'Let Me Choose', a whole service approach to personalisation – Family Mosaic

Family Mosaic's Board made a decision to pilot personalisation across all its services. Money has been made available to support the pilots which are intended to leave a legacy in terms of learning, a shift in customer expectation and a shift in workforce practice. They are just starting to learn about what people actually want but within a few weeks, the effects of listening and responding flexibly are being felt. It seems to be unlocking people's potential and both customers and staff are being motivated by seeing change in others.

- *'X was one of our harder to reach tenants – he hated being told what to do and would use the F-word every other word. Since we've told him, 'It's up to you to tell us when YOU want support', he's engaged a lot better and is much happier. He's the one serving the BBQ' Support worker*
- *'I visit a number of young people's schemes and the atmosphere has always been similar ... Personalisation has changed the atmosphere here - it's a lot calmer and people seem happier. I think it's because we're focusing more on the young people', Caretaker*
- *'That guy used to be unsociable, now he's gotten into group stuff and now he's a sorted fella', Tenant*
- *'I feel like I'm doing the job I always intended to do', Support Worker*

Let me choose – housing and asset management

Family Mosaic started by asking tenants 'What is it you want from your housing officer?' The answers included surgeries, email communication, making a phone-call on the tenant's behalf. The pilot provides flexible service options in addition to the core housing management service and as a way of delivering it.



Asset management budgets are being given to tenants, allowing them to choose specific works to their homes over and above basic maintenance, as well as when and how they want it carried out. This embraces decorating budgets, enhancements, common space improvements, landscaping etc. Rewards for tenants who keep their homes in better condition are being built in.

Let me choose – community-facing activities

Family Mosaic gift-aids profit from sales of property into a community fund and tenant panels decide how to spend the money to benefit the community. There is a proper process and groups can also bid for resources for particular projects. The money has been spent on youth services, financial inclusion, employment advice, social activities such as a trip to the Chelsea Flower Show.

Let me choose – care and support

Family Mosaic is testing different models of service delivery with 6 client groups in order to find out more about what customers actually want:

- *Vulnerable young people living in a hostel* – young people contribute to decisions about core services, group activities and individual purchases through a cash allowance spent in line with their personal plan. Facebook and emails are used to communicate and to get feedback. An IT suite has been provided
- *Adults with a Learning Disability* – these customers understood personalisation to be like the SKY-TV package – with a core service and extras that have to be paid for. *Family Mosaic* are working with this model to build flexible services with this group
- *Older People* – starting with a blank page has led to older, frail people expressing a desire to do more physical exercise. They enjoy throwing a ball about between them, but have requested someone to pick it up for them when they drop it in order to keep the activity going
- *Mental Health Issues* – ‘virtual budgets’ are an incentive for people to engage with the personal plan process. People have chosen to use their cash allocation to get their hair cut and get help cleaning their room and this has inspired others who have been hard to motivate in the past to use their allowance on taking care of themselves. Cash budgets can be pooled to do group activities which is increasing social interaction.
- *Adults with Severe Physical Disability* – starting by opening up choice and control over everyday activities such as when, what and where people want to eat their dinner, when they want to shower, and enabling them to attend their child’s parents evening, for example.
- *Floating Support (multi –disciplinary)* – moving from a traditional service based on tenancy sustainment activities to an integrated and holistic support using a two tier workforce, including both specialist housing support. The senior officer’s role, attending meetings and producing support plans etc complements a hands-on assistant role delivering a variety of tasks in a flexible way.

Family Mosaic is seeking feedback from both customers and professionals in order to shape their service models and personalisation strategy. Some customers are keeping video diaries to record their personal journey. They have also let all their local authority commissioners know about the pilot and are keeping them up to date and sharing information with them. All have been very supportive.

6. Commissioners and providers: working together to put people first

The commissioner and provider roles are distinct and complementary.

Overall, a dynamic relationship will yield the best outcomes, where strategic commissioners remain objective, ensuring that individual and local aspirations are met in a way that ensures value for money. At times, the relationship will be a cooperative one – working together to bring together evidence and increase understanding, which is especially important since providers can give valuable insight into customers' needs and aspirations. At times, it will be appropriate for one constructively to challenge the other over their respective roles and contributions to delivering outcomes. And at other times the relationship will be a contractual one, where the commissioner is procuring services from providers.

Managing uncertainty and risk

The shift to personalisation presents some difficulties for housing providers which are exacerbated in the current financial climate. How can they be sure that there will continue to be a market for their services when commissioning power is transferred to individuals and communities? How can they be sure that capital investment will not be wasted? And how can the Homes and Communities Agency be sure it's investing in built forms that are going to be popular in the medium to long term?

Local authorities as strategic commissioners have a highly significant role to play in helping providers to manage these sorts of risks. Together, local authorities and providers can:

- **WORK TOGETHER** to gather, share and interpret market information to provide accurate, ongoing assessments of demand for housing, health, care and support services
- **GATHER** intelligence on demand trends, for example by understanding the future aspirations of younger generations as they get older
- **HOUSING** providers can be clear about the role they would like to play, going forward
- **LOCAL** authorities can draw up and publish a strategic commissioning framework that clearly sets out how they intend to transform their commissioning arrangements relating to housing, care and support and the timescales over which they intend different stages of transformation to take place
- **ESTABLISH** a transformation team consisting of strategic housing, adult social care and supporting people – and including provider representatives – to highlight and find solutions as transformation progresses and to gain valuable insights from all partners
- **PLAN** ahead for changes in demand, for example through strategic investment to achieve a change of use in a particular scheme
- **IDENTIFY** built forms that can be easily adapted and used either as a integrated housing-support scheme or for general needs housing, depending on changing demand
- **PROVIDERS** can supply evidence of how capital investment will meet assessed demand
- **UNDERTAKE** risk assessments that include the plans of a number of providers in a locality together – so that the combined risks can be understood and managed
- **FIND FLEXIBLE** ways of providing housing and service packages, that can be changed and adapted
- **BUILD** in greater flexibility and tolerance levels to business plans

Personalisation, Total Place and Local Area Cooperation

Personalisation is about providing people with choices and influence over the public service they receive.

Total Place looks at how a 'whole area' approach to public services can lead to better services and better

outcomes for individuals and communities at less cost. It seeks to identify the totality of public resources in an area and redesign services to avoid overlap and duplication between organisations – delivering a step change in both service improvement and efficiency at the local level, as well as across Whitehall.

Local Area Cooperation is a new requirement within the Tenants Services Authority's Neighbourhood and Community Standard for registered providers to 'co-operate with relevant partners to help promote social, environmental and economic well-being in the areas where their properties are'. There are specific requirements to (i) identify and publish the roles they are able to play within the areas where they have properties and (ii) co-operate with Local Strategic Partnerships and strategic housing functions of local authorities where they are able to assist them in achieving their objectives – having taken account of their presence and impact within the areas where they own properties.

Local authorities will be able to shape local markets better because they will know what each of their housing partners can offer. They will be better placed to identify and to fill gaps in service provision, as well as to reduce the overlaps – also helping to deliver the Total Place programme.

These programmes are compatible and can reinforce each other. In the context of effective partnership working they can achieve:

- **BETTER** response to needs and aspirations – where partners consider together how they will respond
- **BETTER** access to services – where housing providers extend provision to more residents by sharing services or contributing financially to a new service, such as money advice
- **BETTER** coverage of services – across more neighbourhoods
- **BETTER** information sharing – through combined information systems, similar to One Place¹⁵

The Local Area Cooperation and Total Place agendas have the potential to increase access to services at a time when public funds are restricted, even though it may limit the choice of provider.

New paradigm – decision-making led by people, shaped by professionals, authorised by politicians, handing over choice and control to individuals

Old paradigm – decision-making led by professionals and politicians, often based on financial strength and political factors



¹⁵One Place: <http://oneplace.direct.gov.uk>

Working together to respond to local communities – Manchester Social Housing Partnership

Manchester Social Housing Partnership is a group of Manchester-based housing providers comprising 5 LSVTs, an ALMO, and several traditional housing associations. They are working together, with the City Council, to listen and respond to the specific needs and aspirations of different communities in relevant ways.

They are establishing a Local Area Cooperation framework that aims to:

- **UNDERSTAND** better the aspirations of different communities
- **DELIVER** services that are relevant to different communities and individuals
- **INFORM** the visioning and planning processes to influence the SCS, LAA and LDF
- **ALIGN** landlord activities and spending with local goals (SCS/LAA)
- **ENHANCE** service coverage across the City to increase access and choice to residents
- **REDUCE** gaps and overlaps in service provision across the locality by coordinating the services they provide better
- **IMPROVE** consistency at the same time as retaining flexibility in delivery



7. Shifting paradigms: people at the centre

Before transformation can take place, it requires commitment to the underlying ethos of putting people at the centre and treating them as individuals. People with support needs prefer to be seen as 'normal people with support needs' rather than labelled as a person with 'a certain category of need', which risks defining them according to their condition.

Achieving a culture and practice that puts people at the centre requires paradigm shifts in relation to at least three areas – governance, financial decision-making and the workforce.

Governance – a new paradigm

Organisations need to facilitate a shift from government, in which decision-making takes place through formal representative structures, to governance, that enables people - whose lives are affected by the decisions made - to participate in making them.

Registered providers are required by the Tenants Services Authority to provide opportunities for their tenants to influence housing related policies and service delivery, to influence their organisations' strategic priorities and to be involved in scrutinising performance¹⁶. Long-term financial sustainability is more likely to be achieved if residents, and future residents, have a bigger say in how their landlord spends money, because spending will be better matched to local requirements.

It is also possible for strategic commissioners – adult social care, Supporting People, Housing and Neighbourhoods – to look to citizens to oversee and steer every stage of the commissioning cycle, including identifying aspirations, building a vision, shaping markets, investing strategically.



¹⁶ 'The regulatory framework for social housing in England from April 2010', Tenant Services Authority
<http://www.tenantservicesauthority.org/server/show/ConWebDoc.20175>

People directly influencing the LA commissioner – Gateshead Council

Valuing People Now is a 3 year Government Strategy that aims to improve the lives of people with learning disabilities, and the lives of their families and carers¹⁷. One of Gateshead Council's responses has set up a Learning Disability Partnership Board which consists of service users, carers and key professionals from partner agencies. It has the remit to:

- **MAKE SURE** *Valuing People Now* happens
- **ENSURE** rights, choice, independence and inclusion for all
- **HELP** people to have the same opportunity to sue the service
- **BE A LOCAL** champion for people with learning disabilities, and their carers
- **HOLD** the council to account for its efforts in helping people to have fuller lives

The Board influences the council at many levels. The Housing Sub Group of the Board has developed 'Key to My Home', a strategy for giving people with learning disabilities more choice about where they live, who lives with them, who gives them support and how they live their lives. As a result they are working to:

- **HELP** people who are supported in special services outside Gateshead to move back to be near their family and friends
- **REDUCE** the number of times people need to move in an emergency
- **MAKE SURE** that all people who have a learning disability and their families have the opportunity to think about the future and make plans
- **MAKE SURE** that everyone has the same opportunity to choose where and how they live, including older and younger people from different ethnic groups who have a learning disability, and including people with high support needs
- **PROVIDE** good information and advice on housing and support choices that are easy to find and understand
- **MOVE** people living in hospitals into better housing

The group has a direct link to a housing development manager for disabilities and can influence the way people's aspirations are matched to available accommodation and the way that gaps in provision are identified.

Governance arrangements like these, that allow people to have a direct influence over the decisions that affect them, are very much in the spirit of personalisation and should be replicated in other areas.

¹⁷*Valuing People Now: a new 3 year strategy for people with learning disabilities 'making it happen for everyone'*, HM Government 2009 <http://valuingpeople.gov.uk/index.jsp>

Financial decision-making – a new paradigm

New paradigm – funding following people

Old paradigm – departmental budgets for departmental priorities

The principle that funding should follow people is key to the success of personalisation. Funding streams need to be flexible so that they cross boundaries and pay for services that are relevant to people, rather than being limited to programme-specific services. For example, paying for relevant adaptations to a person's home and providing appropriate home support may be more appropriate for the individual and a more cost-effective use of a health budget, compared to 8 weeks hospital care. A Total Place approach to resource allocation ensures that money is used to best effect across a local area, rather than being constrained by organisational boundaries.

Some block commissioning of services by local authorities from providers will still be necessary, for example, to ensure preventative services are in place to help people over a transition or to avert a crisis in their lives.

Workforce – a new paradigm

New paradigm – services planned with and organised around people, requiring workforce to be flexible

Old paradigm – service schedules planned by professionals around organisations and workforce

Personalisation requires changes to the culture, systems and practices of both strategic commissioners and providers. Some staff will be able to help lead the move to the new paradigm while others will need assistance to adjust to a new way of working.

Trusting customers to make appropriate decisions can be difficult and for many staff will require a step of faith and the knowledge that good accountability systems are in place. As more budgets are devolved to individuals and communities, the demands for more flexible service delivery will increase with consequences for job descriptions, working practices and schedules. On the positive side, it will bring greater variety to the working day. It should also increase the happiness of customers, which will also bring benefits to employees.

Strategic planners will need to enhance their skills in collaboration and 'co-production'.

In relation to physical regeneration, this means strategies and capital investment plans for a locality – embracing economic development, housing, transport, health, education and leisure – being developed together and in a way that will deliver communities' aspirations. In relation to housing, health, care and support, this means adult social care, Housing and Neighbourhoods, and Supporting People Teams sitting down together and working out how to respond to individuals' aspirations – both in the short and long terms.



8. The transformation agenda – taking steps

There are many ways in which organisations can go about personalising their services. What is important is that they commit to giving greater choice and control and that they then set about actually giving customers that choice and control – and that they continually look for more ways of personalising their services. Successful transformation is more likely to be achieved if each player sees not only what their own role is, but also what the role of others is in delivering genuinely personalised services.

The following 5 steps are not meant to be a blueprint, but rather to provide a way in for those organisations that have made that commitment.

Step 1: Understanding people's aspirations

The essential activities involved in this step are (i) collecting the right information in the right way and (ii) interpreting it well – at both a strategic community level as part of the commissioning process and at an individual level to achieve the best outcomes for individuals.

The standard assessments¹⁸ supply some important information, but by themselves are not enough. Personalisation demands that they are interpreted through the eye of the people on the receiving end of public services. The purpose of consultation, then, must be to gain and maintain an accurate interpretation of the information as a whole. Ideally, it will be an iterative process that provides a coherent picture of changing aspirations over time, and that steers the planning process as it takes place.

Step 2: Devolving decision-making and purchasing power

The natural tendency is for organisations to retain control of budgets, but devolution of purchasing power will result in better outcomes for people. Individuals and communities can influence how budgets are spent through personal budgets, participatory budgeting, top-slicing of mainstream budgets, local estate agreements, for example. Communities should also be able to influence mainstream budgets and strategic plans through the development of more collaborative democratic processes.

Step 3: Visioning and planning to meet people's aspirations

The uncertainty factor for providers can be reduced if strategic commissioners take a lead on (i) generating and publishing a vision for transforming services (ii) working with partners to understand where they fit and generating a partnership framework (iii) planning to meet the aspirations that have been identified by using powers and influence to actively shaping the market. Continuing with block commissioning does not, in most cases, promote personalisation and is not an adequate response to the problem of uncertainty. The TSA's Local Area Cooperation requirements should provide commissioners with some useful information from register providers about their wider offer in a locality.

Governance arrangements will need to be transformed to give individuals and communities the ability to influence the vision and strategic plans that affect them.

Step 4: Information, advice and accessibility

Commissioners and providers both need to find ways of providing people with information in useful and accessible forms. This includes information on what's available and information on performance through reviews from previous customers, for example. Advice that helps people to navigate the increasingly complex information and select the best choices is important for everyone, and in some cases will require specialised advocacy services.

¹⁸Standard assessments include: Joint Strategic Needs Assessments, Housing Market Assessments, Supporting People Needs-Supply Mapping, Adult Social Care Needs-Supply Mapping, Place Survey, Self-Directed Support assessment

Step 5: Transforming the culture of organisations

Strong leadership is needed to transform the culture of strategic commissioners and of providers, to ensure that 'outcomes for people' becomes the driving factor of organisations. Signs of strong leadership in this context include (i) open communication – listening and articulating (ii) a willingness to collaborate with others in a place (iii) awareness of roles in achieving personalisation (iv) a willingness to change, to step into new roles and out of obsolete roles (v) openness to constructive challenge – to ensure that choice and personalisation are embedded within organisations at all levels.

Questions for LA Strategic Housing Commissioners

- Are you gathering information on current and future housing needs and aspirations over and above the Housing Market Assessment and Joint Strategic Needs Assessment – including from people accessing support services and the general population?
- Do you understand how inward and outward population flow, particularly in older age, impacts?
- Are you using information intelligently to inform your strategy and actively to shape the housing market to meet assessed demand now and in the future – including for those requiring care and support?
- How are you influencing the built form of housing to meet needs and aspirations in a flexible way?
- Do you provide a comprehensive housing options service, accessible to everyone especially at the point they are going through life-changes?
- Are you working with housing providers – including the council's own landlord function – to help them coordinate their community activities across the locality?
- Are you managing change in your workforce effectively?



Questions for LA Commissioners of adult social care and Supporting People

- Are you devolving purchasing power to people in appropriate ways?
- Have you discussed with your strategic housing/neighbourhoods team how to incorporate housing and communities as a central component of your commissioning framework?
- Do you routinely ask clients about their housing requirements as part of your self-directed support process?
- Do you direct any funds for housing-related activity, where clients choose this over care or support services or where it could save money from your budget?
- Do you consider how cost-savings might be made by providing more housing-related options for people to maintain their independence, health and wellbeing – either when being released from hospital or preventing people's conditions from worsening?
- Are you managing change in your workforce effectively?

Questions for housing and support providers

- Do you have systems in place for gaining insight into your customers' aspirations and are you sharing the information with your local authority?
- Are you diversifying your service offer and working with other local providers to supply services, in line with customer requests?
- Do you invite feedback from existing customers on an ongoing basis, and publish accurate, meaningful information about your organisation's services and performance?
- If you have an advocacy role, is it free from conflicts of interest?
- Have you considered what roles your organisation would like to play, within your locality and communicated these to your local authority?
- What do existing systems such as the Quality Assessment Framework for support service tell you about how personalised your services are?
- Are you managing change in your workforce effectively?



Further information

General on Personalisation of Housing, health, care, support

- Dept of Health Housing LIN
http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Healthcare/IntegratedCare/Changeagentteam/DH_4073980
 - SITRA
http://www.sitra.org.uk/fileadmin/sitra_user/2009/Publications/Personalisation_prevention_and_partnership_June_2009.pdf
 - CIH <http://www.cih.org/policy/fpp-HousingHealthCare-Dec09.pdf>
 - SCIE personalisation resources <http://www.scie.org.uk/adults/personalisation.asp>
-

Strategic commissioning

- IDeA Strategic Commissioning Online Community <http://www.communities.idea.gov.uk/comm/landing-home.do?id=1505808>
-

Customer insight and menus of services

- Cabinet Office
http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/media/cabinetoffice/corp/assets/publications/delivery_council/pdf/emerging_principles.pdf
 - CIH <http://members.cih.org/bookshop/Catalogue.aspx>
-

Advice and advocacy

- CIH Modernising housing advice <http://www.cih.org/policy/ModernisingHousingAdvice.pdf>
-

Commissioning power

- Hact Up2us programme: <http://hact.org.uk/up2us/1010>
-

Inclusive communities

- CLG <http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/housing/lifetimehomesneighbourhoods?view=Standard>
 - Building communities www.futurecommunities.net
-

The Association of Directors of Adult Social Services represents directors of adult social services in local authorities in England. As well as having statutory responsibilities for the social care of older people and adults with disabilities and people with mental health issues, ADASS members might also share a number of responsibilities for the provision and/or commissioning of housing, leisure, library, culture and arts services within their councils.

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