



July 2015

PRACTICE BRIEFING

Growing Older Together: the development and promotion of resident-led models of housing with care for older people

A programme of work being undertaken by the Housing LIN (Learning and Improvement Network)

1. New housing options and choices for older people

When older people have control over their housing, they are more able to live active and engaged lives over a longer time. In our sheltered housing co-operative people 'grow younger before they grow older' ¹

There is general and widespread agreement that this country has 'to urgently plan how to ensure that the housing needs of our ageing population are better addressed'.² There is also recognition that this is both about increasing the supply of housing suitable for older people and about offering new housing options and choices that will prove attractive to a new generation of older people with changing priorities and higher expectations.

In recent years, there has been a growing interest in resident-led housing for older people. A report by Jon Stevens for Housing LIN called '*Growing Older Together: The Case for Housing that is Shaped and Controlled by Older People*' published in October 2013 demonstrated that:

Housing that is shaped and controlled by older people themselves... is of increasing interest and relevance to a new generation of active, independent minded older people.

The report also found that schemes of this kind - despite their apparent appeal - were still few and far between and far less common than in Northern Europe and North America. The report concluded that if older people were to have greater access to housing of this kind in the UK then various steps would be needed³.

¹ All of the quotations are from people talking about the resident-led housing developments they own and/or manage in *Growing Older Together: The Case for Housing that is Shaped and Controlled by Older People*. Housing LIN (2013)

² From the much-quoted House of Lords Select Committee on Public Service and Demographic Change report called *Ready for Ageing?* published in March 2013. The report asserted that Britain has hardly begun to respond to policy issues raised by an ageing population; in their words we are 'woefully underprepared'.

³ www.housinglin.org.uk/GrowingOlderTogether_CaseStudyReport

2. Raising awareness, engaging policy makers, incentivising developers and providers

(Our leasehold retirement scheme) has come alive since the residents took over...we get things done when we want them done and to a better standard...taking control of the management has changed the whole atmosphere, it has brought people together...

The report for the Housing LIN showed that resident-led forms of housing and care are attractive to those older people who have chosen to live in this way for a variety of reasons. In headline form, these were summarised as:

- *Remaining in control, retaining independence and feeling secure*
- *Being part of an active and self-sufficient community*
- *Giving and receiving mutual care and support*
- *Benefiting from responsive and cost-effective management arrangements*
- *Leading to enhanced wellbeing and reduced dependence*

In promoting and developing such housing, the report concluded that there were three challenges to be addressed:

Raising awareness:

By finding ways of informing older people that there are forms of housing and care that they can commission, design and control directly. And by setting out the advantages of such models and indicating how they might be accessed.

Engaging policy makers:

By informing policy makers and commissioners of the overarching benefits of resident-led models of housing and care for older. And by encouraging them to introduce appropriate policies and support frameworks for a range of new projects and programmes

Incentivising developers and providers:

By highlighting the demonstrable and marketable appeal of resident-led forms of housing and care for older people. And by showing how both private sector and social housing providers can successfully develop more schemes of this kind.

3. Work programme

It seems so obvious that housing with care should be provided in a way that enables people to hold onto their independence, whilst being part of a community that they run themselves. Old age shouldn't be seen as a period of decline, more one of 'continuous personal development'

Since the case study report for Housing LIN in 2013 there has continuing and widening interest in the idea of resident controlled housing with care for older people and this has extended to the development of such approaches within existing housing developments and across established communities and neighbourhoods. The Housing LIN has commissioned and captured examples of practice on a dedicated webpage on its website. It is also aware that many new initiatives and projects have been completed or are underway. For this reason, the Housing LIN has decided to undertake a further programme of work in this area during 2015/16 and, as outlined below, forming a key strand of its high-profile annual conference in March 2016. This programme is in development, but it includes several elements.

1. Overview report

Jon Stevens has been commissioned to produce a second report, which will examine the many different ways in which older people are involved in generating their own housing (and care) solutions. This report will go beyond the 2013 report in two ways. Firstly, it will examine how new thinking along these lines seems to be gaining wider acceptance. There will be an update on general developments in the field of community-led housing and a summary of wider work on older people's housing and care services based on user involvement, peer support, co-production, asset based community development and so on.

Secondly, the overview will cover a broader range of case examples, including:

- the development of support and care networks organised by and with older people in existing housing developments and neighbourhoods
- the introduction of various forms of resident control in older people's housing provided by mainstream private and social housing developers
- new approaches to resident and community-commissioned housing for older people
- including examples of large scale resident-run housing developments for older people

This report will be published by Housing LIN in the autumn of 2015.

2. Liaison with community-led housing organisations, older people's representative forums/networks and other interested parties

Whilst the report is being drafted and subsequently, the Housing LIN will liaise with various groups and organisations that have an interest in new housing with care choices and options for older people. This will include collaborating with the UK

Cohousing Network - who are researching the growth and spread of senior cohousing projects and exploring how cohousing principles could contribute to the development of 'age-friendly' neighbourhoods - and working with the Confederation of Co-operative Housing and the National Community Land Trust Network. Other important links will be with the Housing and Ageing Alliance and its members and with the Centre for Ageing Better.

3. *Housing LIN Spring Conference 2016*

Housing LIN is currently planning its Spring Conference for 2016. It has already agreed with a number of key partners that 'approaches to resident controlled housing with care for older people' will form a significant strand in the conference next year.

It is envisaged that this will incorporate:

- key-note speakers on the arguments for new resident/community-led approaches
- workshops on a variety of projects/models
- a panel discussion with policy makers, commissioners, developers/providers, practitioners and older people.

The whole strand will feature a number of older people, who have commissioned / designed / managed their own housing.

4. *Project work*

The Housing LIN has a panel of consultants and some of these will be working on relevant projects in the build up to the conference and subsequently. This will include work with existing housing providers examining how they can give older residents a greater say in how their housing and care services are provided and looking at options for introducing resident management and control where it is attractive.

4. **About the Housing LIN**

(Our cohousing group) has grown into a lively, friendly, group of people, who are keen to share interests and activities even before we move in...we see ourselves as 'trailblazers' - pioneering a model that can work for all older people...

Previously responsible for managing the Department of Health's Extra Care Housing Fund, the Housing LIN is the leading 'learning lab' for a growing network of housing, health and social care professionals in England involved in planning, commissioning, designing, funding, building and managing housing, care and support services for older people.

The Housing LIN provides a comprehensive range of online resources covering many issues and topics. Of particular relevance are the reports and other publications on 'User Involvement and Co-production'.

Understanding service users' views and experiences is critical to effective service design and delivery. With an increased emphasis on personalisation and co-production to provide choice (these resources) help to guide commissioning, identify service improvements and meet outcomes that people want.

To access these and other resources visit:

www.housinglin.org.uk/Topics/browse/HousingOlderPeople/UserInvolvement

5. Get in touch

(Our housing co-operative) is a good place for older people to live...being involved keeps you 'on the go' and helps you to meet people...this place is really better than sheltered housing...

If you would like to contribute to 'Growing Older Together: the development and promotion of resident-led models of housing with care for older people' by drawing attention to new thinking and emerging opportunities or by highlighting resident or community-led projects for older people, then do get in touch.

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