

STAYING HOME, LIVING WELL

Housing and Support Strategy for
older people and carers in Hastings
and Rother 2007-2027

Executive Summary



Draft - July 2007

Staying home, living well - Housing and support Strategy for older people and carers in Hastings and Rother 2007/2027 - Executive Summary

1. Introduction

1.1 East Sussex County Council has worked closely with older people, their carers and our partners in Hastings and Rother Councils, health, voluntary and independent sectors to plan how we can improve accommodation and housing support services for older people in the Hastings and Rother areas.

1.2 This is a summary of the Housing and Support strategy that is the result of that work and describes an integrated and co-ordinated approach to the development of services with our partners. We have taken into account a number of issues including national and local priorities, what older people and carers say they need, what changes we need to make to services and what resources are available.

1.3 The scope of the strategy primarily addresses the needs of people over 65 and their carers, however we recognise that we are living in an aging society and need to consider and plan for the future needs of all people in later life.

1.4 Our vision is to:

'To enhance the social inclusion, well – being, dignity, choice and independence of older people and carers living in Hastings and Rother through:

- Enabling them to remain in their own homes for as long as possible or move to a more suitable home
- Enabling the development of a range of sustainable options for housing, care and support in later life and facilitating active and informed choices

1.6 The demography of Hastings and Rother is significantly different and demonstrates different needs and supply issues. Hastings covers a smaller area, has a higher population density and social deprivation than Rother which has a lower population density and the challenges of providing services in a rural setting. Although there are issues common to both areas we have highlighted significant differences where appropriate which will impact on both service development and delivery.

2. Strategic context – national and local

2.1 The housing, care and support needs of older people are high on the government's agenda in response to the challenge of a growing older population. There has been a shift in focus away from targeting services and resources primarily on the most vulnerable older people in acute and residential settings to an enabling approach to a wider range of older people to live independently in the community. Housing and support services have a key role to play in achieving this.

- 2.2 Key government strategies including the White paper 'Our Health, our care, our say' (2006) and the Supporting People programme: Supporting Independence and Opportunity (2007) have emphasised the importance of improving quality of life and well being of older people by enabling them to make a positive contribution to their community, to exercise choice and control and to have access to housing related support which will enable them to obtain or remain in their own home.
- 2.3 In addition the government will be launching its 'National Housing Strategy for an Ageing Society' in early 2008. The strategy's underlying themes are to ensure the independence, social inclusion and well-being of older people are met in the delivery of the Government's planning, housing and service reform agendas.
- 2.4 Locally the East Sussex Older People's Commissioning Strategy 2007/12 and Supporting People Strategy 2005/10 (updated in July 2007) have brought together a key set of aims and objectives. Their outcomes are to provide a broad range of health, care, support and housing services to meet difference levels of need from the 'fit and able' to the 'most frail' older people, with an emphasis on preventing physical and mental health deterioration through timely intervention. To also promote 'active aging' through older people's participation in the development, delivery and monitoring of services.
- 2.5 To meet the challenge of an increase in private sector housing developments, Adult Social Care in East Sussex County Council and Housing and Planning departments in District and Borough Council's are working together across the County to take a co-ordinated approach to such developments to ensure they meet future needs. The intention is to produce guidance which will be included in the Core strategy of the Local Developments Frameworks (LDF) of each Council across the County.
- 2.6 The work of this strategy will be referenced in the Core Strategy of the LDF of both Hastings and Rother Council.

3. Consultation

- 3.1 To inform the development of the strategy we looked at national evidence about how older people viewed their housing situation and their future needs. The majority of older people expressed a desire to remain in their own home, have a say in planning future housing options and design and the importance of their home being accessible to good local transport, facilities and amenities.
- 3.2 These views were also reflected in the local consultation sessions that were held with older people, carers and our partners in Hastings and Rother. A range of issues were identified as essential when planning housing and support services including;
- Choice and full knowledge of housing and support options across all tenures
 - Affordability of services, and support to maximise income and benefits
 - Needs of carers and people with dementia need to be considered in any developments
 - Important to maintain people's links to their community to prevent social isolation

- Importance of local transport to enable people to access services and get out and about

4. Demand and needs

4.1 To determine current and future needs and demand for housing and support services we looked at Census data from 2001, ONS sub national population projections to 2026, national prevalence data, local adult social care and public health statistics, current housing registers and the results of local housing needs surveys carried out in 2005.

4.2 We looked at number of significant factors to get a whole picture of the range of people's health, social care and housing needs.

- Population projections
- The numbers of older people living in each area
- Household composition, living conditions and income
- Health, disabilities, mental health and tenure
- Diversity
- Formal and informal care needs
- Housing needs and demand

4.3 Key themes emerged that were common to both Hastings and Rother as well as significant differences and these are summarised below;

- The % of people over 65 who live in Hastings(17%) and Rother(28.4%) is above the national average and over the next 20 years there will be a significant increase
- The largest number of older people live in the Bexhill wards of Rother on the coast
- Over 40% of older people who live in Rother live in rural areas and are less likely to have access to services
- The majority of older people in both Hastings and Rother live in the private sector with a large % of these being owner occupiers
- There is a higher level of deprivation in Hastings and this is reflected in a higher number of people who are on low incomes, have limiting long term illness and live in poor housing conditions
- There will be a significant increase in the number of older people with mental health needs and in particular dementia – this is more prevalent in Rother where there are a larger number of older people
- There is a demand for a range of both specialist accommodation and support services in both the affordable and private sectors

- Numbers of older people from black and minority ethnic groups are relatively low but these are set to increase over the next 20 years particularly in Hastings
- The needs of Gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender older people need to be identified and considered
- Both Hastings and Rother have a significant number of people over 65 who provide informal care which may conceal needs

5. Mapping resources and supply

5.1 There are a broad range of housing and support services in Hastings and Rother provided by the statutory, voluntary and independent sectors*. These are mainly situated where there are high concentrations of population in the coastal strip which includes all of Hastings and Bexhill in Rother which means there are limited services for the 40% of older people who live in Rother in the rural areas.

5.2 Key themes that have emerged from looking at supply and resources:

- The majority of sheltered housing provision and residential and nursing care homes are centred in the towns in both Rother and Hastings with limited supply in rural Rother
- There is only one extra care housing scheme in Hastings and Rother respectively
- The quality of private sector housing is a concern for both Hastings and Rother councils and will impact on older people's housing, health and care needs
- Home improvement agencies, community alarm services and the voluntary sector are the main providers of services to older people in the private sector
- Floating support services are primarily accessible to older people in the social rented sector and a small number of older people in the private sector
- The Council has limited access to nursing and residential beds in rural Rother
- Housing information, advice and options services are mainly provided in areas of high population with limited access to older people in rural areas

* a summary of the responsibilities of these agencies is in the full strategy in appendix 1

6. What we hope to achieve (outcomes)

6.1 Having identified the key needs, demand indicators and mapped current supply of services we can now clearly identify gaps in housing and support services in Hastings and Rother.

6.2 Services will be developed jointly with a wide range of partners and developments and will aim to meet the housing, care and support needs of key priority groups including **:-

- Older people with mental health needs and learning disabilities, including functional illness
- Carers of older people
- Older people in the private sector
- Existing social rented sector tenants.
- The most vulnerable older people e.g. homeless older people
- Black and minority ethnic communities
- Older people living in rural areas
- Gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender communities

6.3 Separate action plans have been developed for Hastings and Rother to take into account local characteristics and priorities. The top three local priorities for Hastings and Rother respectively which will impact on older people are summarised below:

Hastings

6.4 Hastings has characteristics of an urban area with pockets of significant deprivation, economic hardship, social exclusion and poor housing conditions. This is mirrored in the older population. However there is a good supply of specialised accommodation in the social rented sector, residential homes and support services which are reasonably accessible to all wards. Key priorities in Hastings which will impact on older people will be:

- Improve quality of private sector housing
- Expand floating support services to fill gaps in provision
- Expand Health promotion services to prevent avoidable health problems

Rother

6.5 Rother's key challenge is around filling the gaps in services to older people in the villages and small towns in its large rural area. The majority of older people live in the coastal area of Bexhill and as this is where the majority of service provision is based people may have no choice but to move. Rother also has the largest and fastest growing number of people over 65 in the County. Key priorities for Rother which will impact on older people are:

- Expand floating support services to older people in rural areas to fill gaps in uneven provision and maximise accessibility within a large area

**The needs of older people with learning disabilities and older carers of adults with learning disabilities are addressed in the Joint Commissioning Strategy for people with learning disabilities in East Sussex 2007- 2010

- Specialised services for older people with dementia and their carers
- Influence market to develop support services for older people in the private sector

6.6 Using the outcomes identified in the Government paper 'Our health, our care, our say' 2006 as a framework for our action plans we have summarised below what we plan to achieve over the next 3 years:

Improved quality of life for older people

- Ensure all social homes meet decent homes standards
- Ensure all new scheme developments adhere to Housing Corporation guidelines for sustainability, design and future proofing
- Ensure older people can access financial assistance, affordable warmth and secure accommodation services
- Improve accessibility of housing occupied by older people
- Increase floating support services across all tenures and in urban and rural areas targeting hard to reach groups
- Increase range of and access to low level support services and activities such as handy person, gardening and repairs services, telecare to prevent loss of independence
- more fully utilise sheltered housing and extra care schemes as a community 'hub' for services to prevent social isolation in both urban and rural areas

Improved health and well being

- Ensure all developments for older people are accessible to transport links, health, leisure and other amenities if possible
- Influence transport planning by working with partners and planning bodies
- Expand range of health promotion activities

Making a positive contribution

- Develop a mechanism to enable older people and carers to actively input into the design and delivery of specialist housing and support services
- Research impact of changes to sheltered housing for older people and ensure their views influence new service models

Economic well being

- Help older people and carers to maximise income
- Support people to evaluate costs of housing and support options
- Promote information on insulation and fuel related grants
- Information on equity release schemes

Increased choice in accommodation, housing and support options

- Influence the market to ensure private and social housing developments across all tenures meet the needs and aspirations of older people
- Develop an extra care housing scheme in Hastings and Rother and include provision for older people with dementia, learning disabilities, intermediate care beds, carers
- Work with partners and older people and carers to remodel sheltered housing schemes and service delivery
- Increase floating support services across all tenures and in urban and rural areas targeting hard to reach groups
- All service developments will take into account needs of older people with mental health needs and older people from Black and Minority Ethnic and Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender communities
- Expand and improve range of information and advice on range of formal housing and support options, availability of grants and equity release schemes for all tenures
- Improve support, information and advice for older people living in the private sector e.g. owner occupiers and private renters
- Improve access to residential and nursing places for older people in rural areas

Freedom from discrimination

- Ensure all service developments are accessible to potentially excluded groups e.g. black and minority ethnic communities, people with mobility problems, carers, older people with mental health needs, people with disabilities, gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender groups

Increase partnership working

- Establish Housing and Support provider forum for older people to promote partnership working
- Agree County wide partnership agreement for all new developments where capital/ revenue resources are identified

7. Monitoring our progress

7.1 Our progress on the outcomes to be achieved in the action plans will be monitored on a quarterly basis by the multi agency Housing and Support locality group for older people in Hastings and Rother. On an annual basis we will review the strategy, update and consult with all key stakeholders to ensure that we take into account any changes to national and local priorities.

7.2 A full version of the strategy can be obtained by contacting the Strategic Commissioning Team – East Sussex County Council on tel 01273 482533 or email policystrategyadmin@eastsussex.gov.uk.