

**Summary of feedback from 4 consultation events and consultation questionnaires on draft housing an support strategy for older people and carers in Hastings and Rother – December 2007**

## **Introduction**

As detailed in the consultation and involvement plan a range of different methods were used to ensure effective consultation and involvement with all key stakeholders on the draft strategy. As part of the process it was agreed that 4 consultation events should be held in Rother and Hastings (2 in each area) in October and November 2007 which would directly target older people and carers.

In addition a questionnaire was made widely available to enable all stakeholders to directly comment on the strategy.

This report is a summary of the process and outcomes from the four events and responses to the questionnaire.

## **Consultation events**

### **Aim and process**

The multi agency locality housing and support group agreed that the aim of the events were to ensure that older people and carers could have an opportunity to comment on the draft strategy, let us know what housing and support services were important to them and in addition enable them to obtain information on a range of services available for older people and carers in Hastings and Rother.

Two events would each be held respectively in Hastings and Rother to enable a wide range of older people and carers including hard to reach groups to access the events. It was agreed that accessible venues would be identified in Hastings, St Leonard's, Battle and Bexhill.

The format of the day would include a brief presentation of the strategy, an opportunity for the audience to ask questions and work in small discussion groups. In addition agencies and organisations were invited to hold information stalls on services they offered to older people.

East Sussex County Council (ESCC) commissioned Age Concern Hastings and Age Concern East Sussex to co-ordinate the events in Hastings and Rother respectively.

Working in partnership with both Age Concerns the events were widely published through circulating invitations to older people in sheltered housing, community venues, older people's clubs, drop in centres etc. In addition organisations who represented hard to reach groups such as Black and ethnic minorities, Gay, Lesbian, bisexual and transgender communities and carers groups were asked to distribute details of the events. Details of the events were also published in Senior Forum newsletters, local newspapers and on Southern Counties radio.

The events were held in the White Rock Theatre, Hastings, Isabel Blackman Centre (run by the Women's Royal Voluntary Service) in St Leonard's, The Memorial Hall in Battle and Victoria Hall, St John's United Reform Church in Bexhill.

## The events

A total of 53 older people and carers attended the events and around 20 professionals were in attendance from a range of voluntary, independent and statutory sector organisations at each event. These organisations included Age Concern Hastings, Age Concern East Sussex, East Sussex Disability Association, Telecare services, In Touch Home Improvement Agencies, 1066 Housing Association, Social Services Direct, Hastings and Rother Primary Care Trust, Hastings Borough Council, Rother District Council, the Fire Brigade, Care for the Carers and the Senior Forums.

A short presentation summarising the key issues and findings of the strategy was presented at each event and the audience then had an opportunity to ask questions and comment.

During a break of 30 minutes all attendees had an opportunity to chat with each other and to look at the information on the various stalls around each venue.

All attendees were then invited to work in the informal discussion groups. They were asked to use as a guide for their discussion a response to three questions and to prioritise their top three issues to feedback to the larger audience

Where do you want to live in later years?

What support and help will you need?

What else do we need to include in our strategy – have we got it right?

### **Question and answer sessions and discussion groups**

Summarised below are the key priorities which were identified at each event:

#### **White Rock Theatre, Hastings**

- Need to have holistic approach to needs of person, e.g. transport, safety, culture, community.
- Importance of right information that is inclusive
- Organisations need to interface with each more
- Need to put people first and listen to them
- Need to identify needs of Gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender population and ensure services are inclusive to meet their needs
- Information and help with getting low levels services e.g. gardening, help with repairs, safety issues, home care services, nutrition
- Want the choice to be independent
- If unable to stay in their own home preferences would be sheltered bungalows, sheltered housing such as Marlborough House (extra care) and older community housing schemes

#### **Isabel Blackman Centre (WRVS)**

- More extra care schemes like Marlborough House
- Information on what is available to stay in own home
- Need for Disability friendly properties

- Want to stay at home and choice of services to help with this
- Need better support structures to tap into OT services, care packages, home from hospital services
- Need to ensure new 'Choice Based lettings' is accessible for older people–
- Need to ensure older people and service users are involved in planning services
- Range of support needed to help with changing light bulbs, gardening, care, -isolation/good neighbour
- Need to identify funding and promote services available

### **Memorial Hall in Battle**

- Want to live in own home
- Need to know about entitlement to benefits and information on services
- Promote individual choice
- Encourage pro-activeness for ageing
- Better transport links
- Sustainable environment
- Good information and advice
- Important to have good home security
- Good access important
- Help to access social activities and contact

### **Victoria Hall in Bexhill**

- Want to live in own home
- On site support/someone available who knows what older people need
- Whatever support provided must be in the local community
- Information on services
- Publicity of services
- Being local, near to friends & family
- Flexible response to individual needs
- Conscientious effort to relive isolation
- Addressing age discrimination
- Provision of advocacy services/befriending services
- Making links with other services/developing partnership working
- Sort out transport, must be included in strategy. Improve bus routes/evening & weekend services
- Link transport with post offices

### **Summary of top priorities from four events**

- Prefer to live in own home with choice of range of support services
- Importance of good information and advice and help with low level services
- Importance of good transport links
- Need to have holistic approach to needs of person taking into account range of individual needs
- Choice in range of housing for older people including sheltered and extra care schemes

### **Feedback about the events**

We asked attendees to complete evaluation forms to enable us to assess whether we had achieved our objectives and plan future events. The majority of responses were favourable and a summary of these responses is attached (appendix 1).

### **Consultation questionnaires**

A short consultation questionnaire was made available on the websites of ESCC, HBC, RDC and H&RPCT. In addition the questionnaires were distributed to a broad range of stakeholders through information in newsletters, meetings, consultation events and staff, service user and member briefings.

19 questionnaires were completed by 12 females and 7 males.

Unfortunately not all responders completed all the questions. Summarised below are the responses to some of the key questions

#### **1. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements about the draft housing and support strategy?**

*I am happy with the strategy overall* - 14 people either strongly agreed or agreed with this statement

*The priorities and actions set out in the action plan will help to develop and provide the kinds of living arrangements people in early and later old age need* - 16 people either strongly agreed or agreed with this statement

*The priorities and actions set out in the action plan will help to meet my personal needs as an older person or the needs of the older person/people I am representing in this survey.* - 15 people either strongly agreed or agreed with this statement

#### **2. If you are currently looking after, or helping, an older person in an informal (unpaid) capacity, would this strategy help you in your caring role?**

6 said yes and 6 people said no to this question.

#### **3. We have set our priorities for service developments by taking into account the range of needs and views of all older people and their carers, current supply and gaps in services. Is this a useful approach?**

7 people agreed with this approach and 2 said no to this question.

#### **4. Does this strategy give sufficient attention to the needs of people with dementia and their carers?**

3 people said yes and 3 people said no to this question.

In additions arrange of comments and suggestions were made by the people who completed the questionnaire and these are summarised in appendix 2.

### **What's next**

Together with the range of feedback collated from the various consultation and involvement methods used, the information from all the events and the consultation

questionnaire will be incorporated into the final version of the draft strategy and action plans.

The strategy will presented to key ESCC, HBC, RDC and H&RPCT committee and board meetings for final approval in December 2007. A user friendly version of the strategy will be published in January / February 2007.

## Appendix 1

### Summary of response of evaluation forms from consultation events on Draft Housing and Support Strategy for older people and carers in Hastings and Rother

Venue	Town	date
White Rock Theatre	Hastings	16/10/07
WRVS	St Leonard's	29/10/07
Battle Memorial Hall	Battle	31/10/07
St John's United Reform Church	Bexhill	07/11/07

#### Attendees

replies	31
Are you attending as a member of the public/forums?	8 General public x 4 Organisations x 2
Which organisation are you representing today?	Rother Race Action Forum x 1 In Touch x 1 Rother District Council x 1 Anonymous x 1 Rother Seniors Forum x 2 Parish Council x 1 Hastings & Rother PCT x 1
Are you attending as a project, service or scheme provider?	2

#### *General views on the event – how would you rate the following?*

	Excellent	Good	Satisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Organisation of the event	11	18	1	0	0
Venue	8	21	1	0	0
Catering	8	18	3	0	0
Presentation	10	18	2	0	0
Working groups	9	19	2	0	0
Range of information stalls	4	23	2	0	0
Chairing of the Event	11	19	1	0	0
Overall Programme	3	25	3	0	0
Enjoyment of the Day	5	26	0	0	0

comments	
Hastings	two or three mentions of disappointing attendance
St Leonard's	Need more input from Hastings BC
Bexhill	I will attend another similar event in future
Battle	More provision for people with hearing difficulties (over 85 age group) Considered the time well spent

*How well did you feel that the event achieved the following?*

	Excellent	Good	Satisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Practical examples	4	21	1	0	0
Sharing information	11	16	2	0	0
Discussing new ideas	8	19	1	0	0
Identifying next steps	2	12	3	0	0

comments	
Battle	Good to be able to give views and give to others Sometimes there is help available but one doesn't know how to Access it, this forum could help

*How would you rate the accessibility of this event?*

	Excellent	Good	Satisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Physical environment	4	17	8	0	0
Communication methods	4	14	9	0	0
Information	4	17	5	0	0

comments	
Hastings	Two comments about difficulty hearing – poor PA
St Leonard's	Need for PA system – hard of hearing
Bexhill	Parking difficult
Battle	Memorial Hall is easy to find, has good facilities

*I would like to have future contact made with me*

Yes	No
30	0

*Is there anything else you would like to say?*

Hastings	Good to be among like minded people and feel ones views are well received
St Leonard's	"Need more social services support. OT assessment takes too long Help for 1066 Housing Association tenants – minor aids and gardening, not available for others"
Battle	"Organise campaign regarding closure of post offices, ask supermarkets to open smaller shops in villages, might help! Planning dept should restrict all further super/big store developments/improvements, destroying rural communities. Encourage them to support village shops – saves transport/costs/isolation"

## Appendix 2

Summary of responses to question in Consultation Questionnaire

### **Is there anything else that should be covered?**

- Have Council owned/ run homes
- Need to preserve and increase stock of small bungalows
- Need to ensure needs and services of Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and transgender community are include in strategic direction and action plans
- Need to ensure time is given to understand needs of older people with Alzheimer's
- Introduction of wardens in sheltered schemes

### **Are there any other comments or suggestions you would like to make about this strategy or the Action Plan?**

- Homeowners and tenants in private sector need to be made aware of options open to them
- Many older people want modest ground floor accommodation in quiet surroundings to include garden.
- Many bungalows are being developed as family homes which will reduce supply for older people as they will no longer provide accessible accommodation or be affordable
- Assumptions are sometimes made about needs of older people with dementia
- Agree that need to ensure facilities are available for all 50 plus irrelevant of where they are living e.g. built up or rural areas
- Some service users are unhappy about losing on site scheme managers

### **Response to questions asking if needs of carers are covered in strategy**

- I am being looked after but frustration that carers do not have time to communicate with me
- The needs of the 'cared for' need to be put first, the carer does not always know what is needed
- People with dementia support and help with letters and forms
- Need for practical help and advice for carers

### **Suggestions of services or projects to do with housing and support for older people in action elsewhere which people would like to see in Hastings and Rother**

- Estates of small properties for owner occupiers of retirement age and who are fit and able – forbid residence of children and noise nuisance clause
- Service which helps with letter writing and confidential correspondence

### **Contributions from individuals and organisations to action plan**

- Create a community trust
- Age Concern Hastings and Hastings Rother Gay and Lesbian Social Group are jointly surveying all sheltered housing in Hastings concerning GLBT community. Outcomes of survey can inform strategy.