

# Overview of Housing Demand for People in Receipt of Adult Social Care Services

**Adults' Health, Adults' Care and Housing**

**Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

**Date: 6 December 2016**

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Author: Head of Housing and Community Safety

Wards: All

Locality Affected: All

Parishes Affected: All

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## **1. Purpose and Reasons**

- 1.1 This report provides the Adult's Health, Social Care and Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee with an overview of housing demand for those receiving Adult Social Care services.
- 1.2 Housing direction and focus are set out in the Housing Strategy 2015-2026, with the following key priorities:
  - 1.2.1 Responding to the changing housing market: Improving standards in private rented housing
  - 1.2.2 Affordability: Improving the offer
  - 1.2.3 Managing demand: Promoting and maintaining independence
  - 1.2.4 Supporting further economic growth: Increasing the quality and diversity of our housing stock
- 1.3 This work contributes to the corporate priorities aiming to: "Improve infrastructure and housing to support a growing, low-carbon economy," and "Help people to help themselves while always protecting the most vulnerable children and adults."

## **2. Recommendations**

The Committee is recommended to:

- 2.1 Comment on progress made in identifying housing solutions for Adult Social Care service users (section 3.1) and proposed future plans (section 3.21), in particular to:
  - 2.1.1 Develop alternative specialist housing models for the second phase of the specialist housing development plan to expand the current housing offer for people with learning disabilities (paragraph 3.21.1).

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- 2.1.2 Put in place a Supplementary Planning Document on specialist housing to ensure future specialist housing developments are of high quality and in line with best practice standards, enable efficient care, and maximise opportunities for independent living (paragraph 3.21.2).
  - 2.2 Comment on the improvements to services identified in section 3.22 in particular hospital discharge procedures, the application of dementia friendly improvement works and the review of disabled facilities grant awards.
  - 2.3 Identify any areas of concern or interest that require further investigation.
- 3. Detail**
- 3.1 Housing and Adult Social Care (ASC) services have been working together to identify solutions in Housing that would enable ASC service users to be more independent. A joint programme has been developed, as part of which:
    - 3.1.1 An analysis of the current housing situation of service user groups (older people, people with physical disabilities and people with learning disabilities) in receipt of ASC services has been undertaken (see paragraphs 3.3-3.8).
    - 3.1.2 The impact of the Chantry Road bungalows, provided for people with high care needs on the individual's care costs has also been assessed; estimating a combination of savings and cost avoidance of at least £120,000 per year across three one-bed bungalows (Appendix 1).
    - 3.1.3 Similarly, a review of costs of care packages for residents at William Robins Court, established that for most residents the level of support has reduced. On average, the current care package cost is 40% lower than the cost at move-in, and the total cost of support for 15 residents has reduced by almost £85,000 per year (Appendix 2).
    - 3.1.4 A joint Housing and Adult Social Care panel met fortnightly for a year to discuss complex cases and identify appropriate housing solutions. Processes have been clarified and agreed, and a new Social Care Lettings Officer post created in the Housing Lettings

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Team for the period of 2 years to coordinate and ensure suitable housing is secured for ASC service users in a timely manner. The expected benefits are shorter waiting times for housing for complex cases, resulting in smoother transitions from hospital or care settings, allowing individuals to maintain their independence as well as making best use of housing provided within the borough.

3.1.5 An innovative bungalow design has been developed to begin addressing the shortage of specialist housing in Swindon. The design is quick and affordable to build and can be replicated anywhere in the borough. It is suitable for people with learning disabilities as well as older people and those with physical disabilities, and will enable the Council to help people with care needs stay within their community, close to their family and friends. The first phase of developments is underway as set out in 3.8.

3.2 The following sections provide further detail on housing for people in receipt of ASC services, specialist housing need for people with learning disabilities, other services supporting independent living of people with disabilities, key challenges in the private rented sector that may have an impact on future demand for ASC and Housing services, and future plans.

#### Housing situation of people in receipt of ASC services

3.3 The Council has undertaken an analysis of the current service user groups in receipt of Adult Social Care services in relation to their current housing situation (see Appendix 3). The analysis has found that while over 80% of older people and over 97% of people with physical disabilities supported by ASC live in the community, only 70% of people with learning disabilities live in the community, with almost 29% living in residential care.

3.4 This means that in residential care there is an equal percentage (48%) of older people and people with learning disabilities. More than half (55.5%) of these residential care placements for people with learning disabilities are out of area. Furthermore, of all people supported by ASC who live in the community, 58% are older people, almost 23% are people with physical disabilities, and just over 19% are people with learning disabilities.

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- 3.5 This analysis therefore confirms that the provision of suitable specialist housing options for people with learning disabilities in Swindon is limited and requires further attention.

#### Housing need for people with learning disabilities

- 3.6 ASC currently supports 78% (667) of all adults with learning disabilities living in Swindon. In addition to the forecasted growth in the number of people with learning disabilities (see Appendix 3), the proportion of those in receipt of ASC services is also likely to increase further, as a significant number are currently living with elderly parents and will need increased support in the near future (see Appendix 4). As a result, they may need to move from living with family or shared lives carers into more independent accommodation and therefore understanding housing demand for this group of service users is key.
- 3.7 To better understand and manage the level of demand for specialist housing for people with learning disabilities, the Council commissioned a further housing needs analysis, the outcome of which is expected in January 2017. This will inform future specialist housing development and acquisition plans.
- 3.8 In the meantime, to begin addressing the shortage of specialist housing in Swindon, the Council has already developed an innovative bungalow design and is planning to develop 3 sites in the first phase – 5 bungalows each in Bembridge Close and Linden Avenue, and a further 24 bungalows at the Hawthorns to be delivered in 2017. The Bembridge Close and Linden Avenue developments will be one bedroom bungalows, while the Hawthorns development will comprise 22 bungalows for single service users and 2 bungalows for 2 people sharing, therefore accommodating 26 service users.

#### Other services supporting independent living of people with disabilities

- 3.9 In addition to the above, which is targeted specifically at ASC service users, the Council supports Swindon's most vulnerable residents through a number of other services that are accessible to all residents, but which often prevent or delay the need for the provision of ASC services. These include minor and major adaptations, a move-on programme for Council tenants, and Homeline and Homeline+ services.

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- 3.9.1 In 2015/16, 115 major adaptations (including level access showers, stair lifts, access ramps, and conversions) were completed through Disabled Facilities Grants of just under £680,000 in owner occupier or private rented sector tenanted properties; approximately 20% of these were given to people in receipt of ASC services. A further 290 major adaptations were completed in Council-owned properties, at a total cost of £960,000.<sup>1</sup> The aids and adaptations process is currently being reviewed to increase its efficiency and enhance the preventative impact of adaptations in preventing further health deterioration and improving the quality of life of vulnerable Swindon residents. In the first 7 months of the current year (2016/17); grants of £690,000 have already been given. This creates a budget pressure on this mandated provision with an overspend of almost £400,000 forecast. It is not yet clear if this is a single year aberration or whether this is a considerable steepening of the already rising demand.
- 3.9.2 Furthermore, the Council supports Council tenants who are in need of adaptations but are under-occupying or where their property cannot be suitably adapted to meet their long-term needs, to move to a more suitable Council property. Between August 2015, when this approach was built into the adaptations process, and September 2016, 40 referrals were received and 11 households successfully moved. This has avoided £226,000 in adaptation costs, freed up much needed family housing for families on the housing register list, and delivered better outcomes for tenants in need of accessible housing.
- 3.9.3 Housing also continues to provide the Homeline monitoring and response service to approximately 3,400 residents of Swindon to help them stay independent within their own home; and also cover sheltered housing schemes when sheltered housing staff are not on duty. In addition, the Homeline + service currently supports over 200 users with enhanced monitors, such as bed exit sensors and smart fall pendants.

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<sup>1</sup> Two case studies demonstrating the impact of major adaptations on tenants' lives are available as Appendix 1 of the February 2016 report to Adults' Health, Social Care and Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee on Tackling Health Inequalities through Housing.

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## Challenges in the private rented sector

- 3.10 According to the UK House Price Index, house prices in Swindon were 12.61% higher than the previous year in August 2016. Rents in the private sector are also rising and the differential between the Local Housing Allowance (LHA) and the market rent has risen significantly. It is important to consider the impact of these changes, as some of the people affected may be in receipt of ASC services.
- 3.11 A number of tenants have to find an additional £100 per month to make up the shortfall, which is particularly difficult for those on low incomes or solely reliant on benefits. Housing work with tenants who find themselves in this situation to ensure they are maximising their income by claiming all the benefits they are eligible for and refer them to the money management advice service.
- 3.12 The Council also operates a Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP) scheme, which tenants can apply for to meet the shortfall between the LHA and their rent. However, these are intended for short periods while tenants look for more affordable accommodation, which can be difficult to find. Total spend on DHP between April and September 2016 was £175,000.
- 3.13 As a result, the Homeless Team has seen a 30% increase in homeless applications over the past 12 months; mainly due to tenants being served notice in the private rented sector or unable to afford the rent. Eviction from the private sector now accounts for 40% of applicants placed into temporary accommodation.
- 3.14 The Council also has a limited Prevention Fund that can be used when it is more cost effective for the Council to continue paying the shortfall in the rent rather than accepting a homeless duty to accommodate in temporary accommodation. This has so far been used once in 2016 to cover a shortfall of £600 for 6 months.

## Private rented sector stock and Houses in Multiple Occupancy

- 3.15 Similarly, some ASC service users may be living in poor conditions in the private rented sector and it is therefore important to consider the condition of the private rented sector stock.
- 3.16 In 2011, the Building Research Establishment (BRE) prepared an assessment of the condition of private sector housing stock in



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Swindon<sup>2</sup>, which indicated that the Swindon private sector housing stock is better than the national average.

- 3.17 The highest proportion of non-decent homes in Swindon are in the Eastcott and Central town wards, the wards with the highest density of Houses in Multiple Occupancy (HMOs). 720 HMOs in Swindon are currently known to the council, and it is estimated that perhaps a further 600 – 700 are currently unknown. Only 116 HMOs in Swindon are licenced, as licensing currently only applies to very large HMOs (i.e. 3 storeys or more and 5 or more occupants).
- 3.18 In 2016, 64 new HMO's have been identified so far, compared to 44 in 2015 and an average of 20 per year in previous years. In addition, 171 HMOs have been brought up or returned to a compliant standard in 2016.
- 3.19 Public Protection also carried out 319 non-HMO related complaint investigations and served 19 notices in year to end of August 2016. The majority of complaints are therefore dealt with without recourse to formal enforcement, but through advice or engagement with the owner or landlord. The majority of hazards identified and acted upon are excess cold, fire safety, slips and trip hazards, and crowding and space.
- 3.20 In addition, formal legal action has been taken in 2016 in relation to poor and illegal conversions of outbuildings, lofts, or annexes (so-called 'beds in sheds') and a survey of the central area completed, which suggested that although this remains an issue, Swindon fares better than many neighbouring towns & cities.

#### Future plans

- 3.21 To continue addressing the demand for housing for people in receipt of ASC services, the Housing and ASC programme intends to:
  - 3.21.1 Build on the outcome of housing needs analysis for specialist housing provision and develop alternative specialist housing models for the second phase of the specialist housing development plan to expand the current housing offer for people with learning disabilities.

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<sup>2</sup> Swindon Borough Council: BRE Housing Stock Models and options for further developing private sector housing information. BRE April 2011

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3.21.2 Put in place a Supplementary Planning Document on specialist housing to ensure developers who are interested in developing accommodation for older people, as well as people with physical and learning disabilities, develop properties of a high quality and inclusive design, located within communities, as this can enable independence, thus supporting more sustainable care provision, the cost of which is often met from the Council's budget for Adult Social Care. Currently, however, the Council's Planning service is limited in its ability to influence the design and location of specialist housing, but there is the opportunity to develop guidance to support delivery of inclusive design and best practice specialist housing by means of a Specialist Housing Supplementary Planning Document (SPD).

3.21.3 Develop an improved assistive technology offer for people with learning disabilities to increase independence and quality of life for people with learning disabilities, while ensuring their environment remains safe.

3.21.4 Monitor the impact of the new Social Care Lettings Officer post on waiting times for housing for complex cases and ability to secure housing within the borough. It is also anticipated that gaps in current housing offer will be identified through this post.

3.22 In addition, the following plans are in place to improve outcomes for a wider range of Swindon residents:

3.22.1 Pathways for hospital discharge for Swindon residents in need of accommodation or requiring major adaptations to their existing accommodation will be reviewed and improved.

3.22.2 Improvement actions identified through the aids and adaptations process review will be implemented, including the reduction of waiting lists for technical and financial assessments for disabled facilities grant through improved provision of information to applicants and an earlier triage to allow officers to focus on cases with a reasonable chance of success.

3.22.3 Property Maintenance Team will be briefed on the new dementia-friendly housing guidance that has been developed in-house, to ensure our sheltered housing is dementia friendly. The guidance will also be made available on My Care My Support, so



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people can help themselves or their friends and relatives and continue to live in their homes for longer.

3.22.4 To respond to the pressures of increased homelessness, the in-house temporary accommodation offer for families will be improved and an extension of the current Night Shelter for rough sleepers from one to two or three nights is being considered. Funding bids are also being prepared in partnership with Wiltshire and Bath & North East Somerset to bid for additional prevention and rough sleepers fund being made available by the Department for Communities and Local Government.

3.22.5 Subject to securing approval to recruit to a maternity cover post, Public Protection also intend to continue introducing and integrating the Deregulation Act provisions around prohibiting retaliatory eviction of tenants complaining of poor conditions (preventing s21 eviction) into internal processes, including provision of information to tenants and landlords and integration into the enforcement process. This should reduce the number of people presenting as homeless due to eviction or because their private rented property is in poor condition.

3.22.6 The mandatory HMO licensing regime will be extended to all HMOs containing 5 or more occupants (currently applies only to 3-storey properties); notably the majority of HMOs in Swindon are 2-storey. This will allow the opportunity for better enforcement and detection of these high risk properties and have a positive effect on what are often the most vulnerable residents in Swindon.

3.22.7 The newly introduced 'Rogue Landlord' provisions of the Housing and Planning Act 2016, including Rent Repayment Orders and Banning Orders where appropriate, will be integrated and Civil Penalty powers adopted as a simpler alternative to prosecution for common housing offences, such as HMO management and licensing offences, overcrowding offences, and non-compliance with enforcement notices. Civil penalties of up to £30,000 will be authorised by the legislation from April 2017 and the plan is for these to be retained by the borough to fund housing enforcement work.

3.22.8 Introduce a requirement for all rented properties to have smoke and carbon monoxide alarms, and fixed penalty charges for non-

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compliance, to increase fire and poisoning safety of private tenants.

## **4. Alternative Options**

- 4.1 The options set out include choices around capital investment and the use of statutory powers; Members' views on how these approaches can be improved are welcomed.

## **5. Implications, Diversity Impact Assessment and Risk Management**

### Financial and Procurement Implications

- 5.1 Financial implications are set out in the report. Rents have reduced by 1% per annum for the 4 years from 2016/17 through to 2019/20 and annual budgets will be set within available funding.

### Legal and Human Rights Implications

- 5.2 There are no legal and human rights implications resulting from this update.

### All Other Implications (including Staff, Sustainability, Health, Rural, Crime and Disorder)

- 5.3 None.

### Diversity Impact Assessment

- 5.4 None undertaken for this report; individual Diversity Impact Assessments have been completed for the Housing Strategy and the Homelessness Strategy.

### Risk Management

- 5.5 Risks to individual services are being managed as part of these services.

## **6. Consultees**

- 6.1 The Interim Corporate Director, Resources (Section 151 Officer) and Director of Law and Democratic Services (Monitoring Officer) are consulted in respect of all reports.

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## **7. Background Papers**

7.1 None.

## **8. Appendices**

8.1 Appendix 1: Review of Chantry Road bungalows, November 2015

8.2 Appendix 2: Review of movement in cost of packages of care for residents of William Robins Court, 2009-2015

8.3 Appendix 3: Overview of service user groups in receipt of Adult Social Care services

8.4 Appendix 4: Housing for people with learning disabilities - tables