

Housing Strategy 2009-2014

healthy homes, healthy lives, healthy city

Older People's Housing Strategy

executive summary



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Published by

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About this Strategy

The Older People's Housing Strategy has been developed to address important citywide issues that affect the older population of Brighton & Hove – both now and in the future.

The strategy is relevant to all older people and their carers irrespective of the type of housing they live in. The majority of older people are owner occupiers in traditional housing. There is a small and potentially vulnerable group of older people in private rented housing and we have a very active community of older people living in social housing, particularly in sheltered housing. Overall, this strategy holds to the fundamental principle that older people want to continue to live in their own homes.

Not only does the Older People's Housing Strategy help us address the needs of the city's older population over the next five years, it also gives us an opportunity to create a framework of mutual respect, involvement and understanding that sets high standards and lays the foundations for meeting the needs and aspirations of the future older population.

If you have any questions or comments about this strategy, please contact:

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Foreword

Increases in life expectancy combined with improvements in healthcare and support ensure that reaching an 'old' age is no longer a barrier. Being old should not be seen as a burden, but an opportunity that can be a springboard to new learning, new experiences and a healthy and active way of life.

The majority of older people already live in good quality housing, have full and active lives and are engaged in wider social or family circles. However, not all older people are so fortunate. Older people can become more vulnerable as they grow older due to health complications, financial difficulties or the contraction of social networks, with the oldest old being most at risk of poor quality housing, isolation, and reducing independence.

Our strategy is working to make sure that all new homes in the city are built to a high standard that makes them suitable to adapt as the needs of residents change. We are also helping to improve the quality of older people's existing homes, whether they own their home or rent, with a range of measures designed to help with maintenance, energy efficiency and accessibility.

To help people maintain independence we are improving the support available to older people. When a person's existing home is no longer manageable - it may be too large or unable to be adapted - we are helping people move to more suitable housing of their choosing. Also, changes to the way we deliver services will look at ways of helping older people maintain and develop social networks to help them improve their independence, reduce isolation and encourage a more active and healthier lifestyle.

However, these initiatives will not be a success if older people and their carers are not able to easily access information on the vast range of assistance available. A co-ordinated approach to information and services will contribute to helping those in need to reach services that can make a significant difference to their wellbeing and quality of life.



Jim Baker
Director, Age
Concern
Brighton Hove
& Portslade and
Chairman of the
Older People's
Housing &
Support
Working Group



**Councillor
Maria Caulfield**
Cabinet Member
for Housing

When this strategy comes to a close the older population in the city will have started to increase at four times the rate of the younger population. This strategy aims to capitalise on the intervening years to assist services across the city in actively planning to meet these future increases in demand. More importantly, our strategy seeks to use this period of stability to set high standards for services that make sure aspirations are recognised and people are treated with the respect and dignity they deserve.

This is the first Older People's Housing Strategy for Brighton & Hove and it has only been possible through a new partnership – the ***Older People's Housing & Support Working Group***. This partnership brings together the council, health services, community and voluntary sector agencies and older people's champions to work collectively in improving quality of life in the communities we serve.



Jim Baker
Director, Age Concern
Brighton Hove & Portslade and
Chairman of the Older People's
Housing & Support Working
Group



Councillor Maria Caulfield
Cabinet Member for Housing

1 Executive Summary

1.1 Our Strategic Housing Vision for Brighton & Hove

The Older People's Housing Strategy is part of a group of housing-related strategies that supports the overarching ***Housing Strategy 2009-2014: healthy homes, healthy lives, healthy city***, sharing the same united vision:

Enabling healthy homes, healthy lives and a healthy city that reduces inequality and offers independence, choice and a high quality of life

Other supporting strategies include the BME (Black & Minority Ethnic) People's Housing Strategy and the LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Trans) People's Housing Strategy.

Objectives of the Older People's Housing Strategy

The objectives of this strategy are specific to the needs of older people but also support the wider Housing Strategy:

- Objective 1 Make sure older people are able to access a mix of high quality housing suitable for their changing needs and aspirations
- Objective 2 Make sure older people are supported to sustain their independence as members of the wider community
- Objective 3 Make sure older people are able to access services and become involved in service development and decisions which affect them

Each objective has a number of strategic goals that outline the main actions and success criteria for this strategy.

Making a Difference

Over the lifetime of this strategy we would like to achieve:

- Improved support for isolated older people living in the community and older people wishing to downsize
- All new homes built to the Lifetime Homes Standard and 10% of all affordable housing built to the wheelchair (Accessible Housing) standard
- An Accessible Housing Register of adapted and wheelchair-accessible properties
- Improved access to information on issues relevant to older people and carers
- Critical review of our progress by the Older People's Housing & Support Working Group

Our Strategic Principles

The Housing Strategy upholds six principles that underpin all of the work we do and equally apply to this strategy:

- A healthy city
- Reducing inequality
- Improving neighbourhoods
- Accountability to local people
- Value for money
- Partnership working

Health Impact Assessment

We recognise that housing plays an important part of all aspects of people's lives, particularly health and wellbeing. As part of the development of this strategy, the Primary Care Trust has carried out a Health Impact Assessment on the city's housing stock and housing needs. The results of this assessment are helping us to make sure that our strategy and action plans contribute to improving the health and wellbeing of local people.

1.2 Engaging Local People

Effective engagement with older people, their carers and representatives is at the heart of this strategy. We developed the strategy in stages with extensive consultation with stakeholders to make sure that it meets the needs and aspirations of the city's older people.

Feedback from older people has highlighted that most have aspirations similar to the population as a whole – to have a full, independent, healthy and enjoyable life. Having safe and secure housing that enhances and supports aspirations is an important part of this overall picture in helping these aspirations become a reality.

Strategy Consultation

The first round of consultation was undertaken over a period of three months in summer 2007 giving local residents and stakeholders the opportunity to comment on a Consultation Briefing Pack covering different aspects of housing and support. The pack was available on the council website and throughout the city in libraries and other public places. It was also sent out to many stakeholders, voluntary organisations and residents.

Officers also went out into the community, attended social functions, service user groups' meetings and other events such as Celebrating Age, the BME Elders Information Day and the Older People's Services Provider Group to seek the views of local people.

Case Study: Older People's Housing & Support Working Group

Whilst developing the strategy we set up an Older People's Housing & Support Working Group made up of representatives from a wide range of older people's support and advocacy groups, the community and voluntary sector, the Primary Care Trust and the local authority. This group has reviewed each stage of the strategy development process and made many valuable contributions to our strategic priorities and action plan (see Appendix 2).

The second round of consultation concentrated on the Strategy Framework – our proposed priorities and actions developed from the findings of the first round of consultation. More consultation was carried out on this framework which has resulted in changes to our priorities and was used to help develop this strategy and action plan.

The third round of consultation showcased the draft Older People's Housing Strategy. Consultation was completed over a three month period, from October to December 2008. During this round of consultation the draft Older People's Strategy was available on the council website and sent out to many stakeholders, voluntary organisations and residents.

Officers met with service providers and went out into the community to seek the views of local people, by attending social functions, service user groups' meetings and other events such as Celebrating Age.

In November 2007 a successful stakeholders' event was held to consult on the group of draft housing-related strategies. The event was attended by representatives from a range of service providers including health, social services, voluntary sector and community champions.

On completion of the final round of consultation comments were collated, evaluated and integrated into the strategy.

We do not want consultation to end with the publication of this strategy, but would like it to be a part of an ongoing process, involving local people and other stakeholders throughout the life of the strategy, helping us to monitor its implementation and review our services.

1.3 The Goals of this Strategy

Each objective has a range of strategic goals that will be developed and implemented throughout the lifetime of this strategy.

Strategic Objective 1: Make sure older people are able to access a mix of high quality housing suitable for their changing needs and aspirations

Our strategic goals under this objective are to:

- Goal 1 Make sure the city's new and existing housing stock is able to meet the current and future needs of the population
- Goal 2 Promote a better use of properties that are particularly suitable for meeting the needs of those with disabilities and their carers
- Goal 3 Maximise support and assistance to help older people repair and improve their homes

Strategic Objective 2: Make sure older people are supported to sustain their independence as members of the wider community

Our strategic goals to help sustain independence are to:

- Goal 4 Support the provision of a greater range of support services to older people in their own homes
- Goal 5 Create safe and accessible communities that meet the needs of older people
- Goal 6 Develop the role of extra care and sheltered housing to make sure it is inclusive and part of the wider community
- Goal 7 Work closely with health and other service providers to provide the necessary housing and support that will minimise or prevent hospital or residential care admissions and dependency

Strategic Objective 3: Make sure older people are able to access services and become involved in service development and decisions which affect them

Our strategic goals to help engage older people are to:

- Goal 8 Continue to work with the Older People's Housing & Support Working Group to deliver services that have a positive impact on the lives of older people
- Goal 9 Develop systems to monitor service use, outcomes, satisfaction and complaints to identify gaps to help shape service development and make sure services are welcoming and inclusive
- Goal 10 Provide easily accessible and understandable information and advice regarding housing and services which are available to the city's older people, families and carers

1.4 Local Area Agreement

The Brighton & Hove Local Area Agreement (LAA) sets out the priorities for the city and has been agreed between the Government, the local authority, the Local Strategic Partnership and other key partners.

The agreement contains 35 key performance indicators that the Government will use to assess how the city is performing and includes additional local indicators to reflect key issues. As housing has such wide-reaching effects on people's lives, our strategy also contributes to a wider range of performance indicators than are in the LAA:

The priorities and goals of this strategy contribute to the following National Indicators for Local Authority Partnerships:

- **NI 1: Percentage of people who believe people from different backgrounds get on well together in their local area**
- NI 2: Percentage of people who feel that they belong to their neighbourhood
- **NI 4: Percentage of people who feel they can influence decisions in their locality**
- NI 5: Overall/general satisfaction with local area
- **NI 7: Environment for a thriving third sector**
- NI 21: Dealing with local concerns about anti-social behaviour and crime by the local council and police
- **NI 119: Self-reported measure of people's overall health & well being**
- NI 124: People with a long-term condition supported to be independent and in control of their condition
- NI 125: Achieving independence for older people through rehabilitation / intermediate care
- NI 131: Delayed transfers of care from hospitals
- NI 137: Healthy life expectancy at age 65
- NI 138: Satisfaction of people over 65 with both home and neighbourhood
- NI 139: People over 65 who say that they receive the information, assistance and support to exercise choice and control to live independently
- **NI 141: Vulnerable people achieving independent living**
- NI 142: Vulnerable people who are supported to maintain independent living
- **NI 154: Net additional homes provided**
- NI 155: Number of affordable homes delivered (gross)
- **NI 158: Percentage of decent council homes**
- NI 160: Local Authority tenants' satisfaction with landlord services
- **NI 187: Tackling fuel poverty**

(Indicators in bold are also included in Brighton & Hove's Local Area Agreement)

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