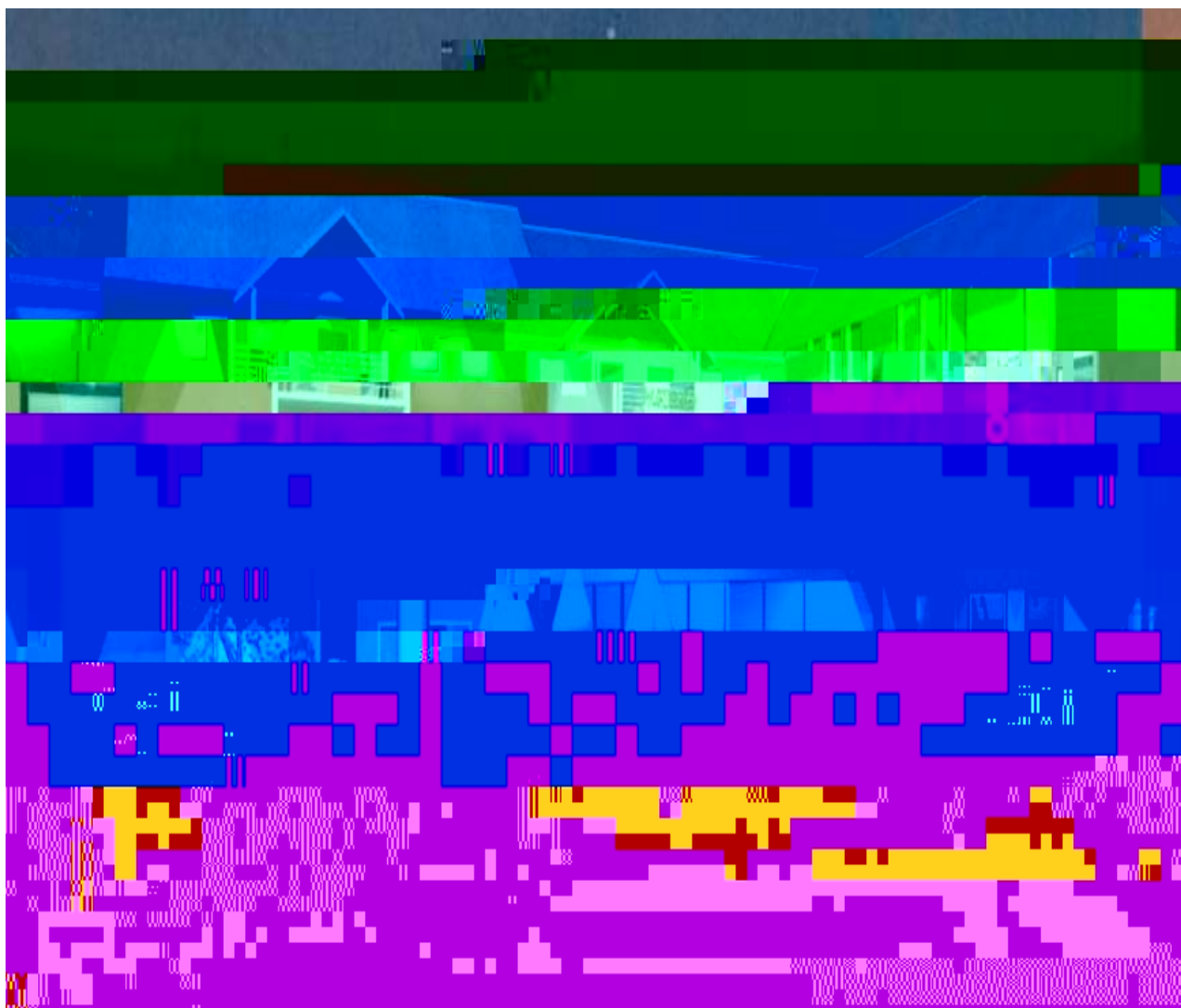


Housing Provision for Older People



A Report from Overview & Scrutiny





Housing Provision for Older People

Glossary

ABC	Assist Birmingham Centre
ASB	Anti-social behaviour
BACOP	Birmingham Advisory Council of Older People
BASBU	Birmingham Anti Social Behaviour Unit
BCC	Birmingham City Council (also referred to as the City Council)
BME	Black Minority Ethnic Group
DDA	Disability Discrimination Act
DFG	Disabled Facilities Grant
Extra Care Housing	Extra Care provides a housing environment for older people with low level care needs. It provides adapted accommodation with flexible on-site care and community facilities.



Housing Provision for Older People

Summary

- 1.1.1 The ageing society poses one of our greatest housing challenges. It is estimated nationally that households where the main householder is over 65 will account for almost half of projected growth in households to 2026, resulting in 2.4 million more older households than there are today.
- 1.1.2 It is now clear that housing, health and care are becoming increasingly interdependent. These days most people as they get older wish to remain in their own homes for as long as possible. But as people live longer, and their needs intensify, the level of demand on the care and support system increases, resulting in inevitable difficulties in service funding. Good housing is therefore critical to managing the mounting pressures of care and support expenditure and it is clear that services need to be planned and integrated to reflect this.
- 1.1.3 This review was undertaken jointly by the Housing and Urban Renewal and Adults and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committees to explore how these issues are being addressed in Birmingham.
- 1.1.4 Members were keen to understand how the Adults and Communities and the Housing and Constituencies Directorates were working together to address the very real challenges that are being presented by the ageing society. To do this the Review Group examined the relevant local policies and strategies relating to housing and older people that are in place or being finalised.
- 1.1.5 It also considered both the specialised housing that is currently being provided in the city as well as the range of additional support that is available to support independent living for older people who chose to stay in their own homes.
- 1.1.6 Finally it looked at plans for how these services will need to adapt and develop in the future not only to respond to the anticipated overall increase in demand but also to support greater focus on wellbeing and prevention, choice and personalisation of services. The personalisation agenda represents a massive challenge because for the first time, the individual will have control of spending and purchasing care and support and the way in which people choose to spend may be on very different services from those that are currently on offer.
- 1.1.7 Towards the end of their evidence taking sessions Members were made aware of the significant effect that the recession is having on the City Council's plans to part finance capital development schemes through the sale of land from vacant sites. As a direct result of falling land values it has been decided that the Adults and Communities Directorate will need to pause its Older People's Modernisation Programme and review its plans for the provision of a network of Care Centres across the city. This in turn will impact on the speed of the closure programme for its elderly person's homes. In order to determine a way forward it is undertaking a consultation exercise with partners in health and housing to bring the Commissioning Strategy for Older People's Services up to date ready for a launch in 2010. Given the timing of this announcement it was not



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possible for the Review Group to explore the implications of these decisions in detail but they are indeed significant for the City Council for the following reasons:

- The dependence of the City Council on land sale receipts to fund a range of capital programmes (not just for Adults and Communities Directorates plans) is looking increasingly unfeasible in the current economic climate.
- It is unclear how the proposal to pause the plan to build the network of Care Centres across the city will impact on the existing and planned specialised housing provision (such as sheltered housing and extra care). What other options in the city will be available for older people with high dependency needs if the overall number of planned Care Centres is reduced? How will this impact on the balanced community of care needs within the city's Extra Care Villages?

1.2 Strategies and Joint Working

1.2.1 Members found that there were a number of both established and currently draft strategies and policies that set a framework for housing provision for older people. These include:

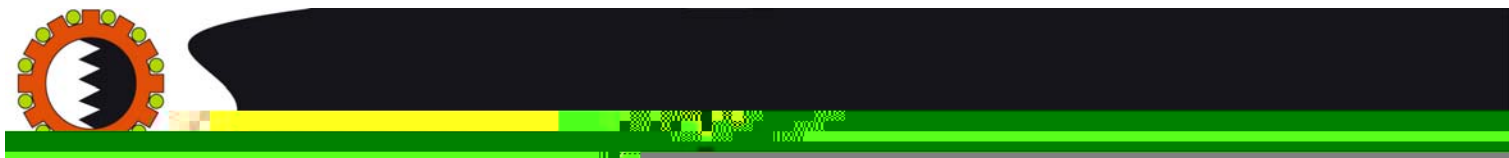
- The Joint (Adults and Communities and Housing) Commissioning Strategy for Older People's Services 2005 -2010 (which is now as set out above subject to review).
- The recently approved (Housing led) Planning for Housing in Later Life Strategy.
- Be Birmingham's (draft) Well Being Strategy for Older Citizens.

1.2.2 Members felt that whilst all of these strategies recognised and acknowledged links to one another there was still a degree of compartmentalisation and that it was not clear in practice how all the positive proposals and actions which they individually propose will meld together and complement each other to achieve a coherent impact. Certainly given the very real challenges outlined above it would appear that there is a need for a more robust collaboration.

1.2.3 Members also heard of the joint and partnership working that has developed across the two Directorates for example:

- At a city-wide level both Strategic Directors are members of the Birmingham Health and Well Being Partnership.
- At a strategic level both of the Directorates have worked together to produce or contribute towards the production of the key strategies and joint strategy meetings take place. In addition the Directorates are working together on a joint plan for integrated home care and support employing assistive technology.
- At a commissioning level a Joint Commissioning Group has senior officer representation from both Directorates and a jointly funded commissioning post has been established to work across the two Directorates on the Supporting People Programme.





Summary of Recommendations

	Recommendation	Responsibility	Completion Date
R1	That given the challenges that must be faced in the future, existing arrangements for joint working between the Adults and Communities and Housing and Constituencies Directorates should be evaluated and possibly revised to ensure that they are able to meet emerging demographic and resource challenges. This must be f		



2 Terms of Reference

- Councillor Gwyn Neilly
- Councillor Barbara Wood (from January 08)
- Councillor Geoff Sutton (until January 08)
- former Councillor John Cotton (until May 08)
- former Councillor Steve Bedser (until May 08)

2.2.4 In addition, the Review Group had three co-optee members: Antonio Forsyth, Doug Mellis and Jim Nicholl.

2.2.5 The Review Group was supported by Natalie Borman, Jill Short and Sarah Fradgley from the Scrutiny Office, Louise Collett from the Housing and Constituencies Directorate, and Jon Tomlinson and David Mason from the Adults and Communities Directorate.

2.3 Methodology

2.3.1 The Review Group met with a range of City Council Officers from the two Directorates to hear about the current provision and future plans. In addition, they heard evidence from local Housing Associations, City Councillors and MPs, as well as the Birmingham Advisory Council of Older People (BACOP) and the Older People's Reference Group (OPRG), the Sheltered Housing Liaison Board, the Cabinet Members for Housing and Adults and Communities and the Strategic Directors.

2.3.2 The Review Group wrote to all Registered Social Landlords (RSLs) inviting them to submit comments to the review. In addition the group met five RSLs (Anchor Trust, The ExtraCare Charitable Trust, Nehemiah United Churches Housing Association, The Thomas Pocklington Trust and Waterloo Housing Association).

2.3.3 Members also visited the Assist Birmingham Centre, the Norman Power Care Centre, a variety of



3 Background

3.1 Introduction and National Context

3.1.1 This review was undertaken as the Government published its *Lifetime Homes, Lifetime Neighbourhoods - A National Strategy for Housing in an Ageing Society*. This report acknowledges that the ageing society poses one of our greatest housing challenges. It notes that by 2026 older people will account for almost half of the increase in the total number of households resulting in 2.4 million more older households than there are today. The report also points out a range of other significant national factors:

- The 75 plus age group is growing faster than any other.
- The older population is increasingly diverse, with more older men and more older people from black and minority ethnic communities, each with their own needs and aspirations.
- Over a million people are predicted to suffer from dementia by 2025.
- The numbers of older disabled people are increasing.
- There is increasing polarisation in terms of wealth and poverty among older people.

3.1.2 The Strategy recognises that most of our homes and communities are not designed to meet people's changing needs as they grow older. And that older people's options are too often limited

support. Housing is central to health and wellbeing, so services need to be planned and integrated to reflect this.

- 3.1.6 It is becoming increasingly evident that housing, health and care are increasingly interdependent. Good housing is critical to managing the mounting pressures of care and support expenditure. Services need to be planned and integrated to reflect this. Increasing longevity, the length of time people are living in poor health, the greater intensity of people's needs, plus changes in family structure and attitudes, all add up to more demand on the system and inevitable difficulties in funding. We live in a mixed public and private economy for older people's housing and social care, with significant variations in the capacity of individuals to pay for themselves.
- 3.1.7 Another report of significance is Age Concern's research into social exclusion in later life *Out of Sight, Out of Mind* which found that severe social exclusion is a significant and pressing problem amongst the elderly. 1.2 million over 50s face social exclusion in three or more areas of their life. It highlights that "the solutions to social exclusion can be simple and relatively inexpensive – repairs around the home, better information and advice, social opportunities and accessible transport". What it believes is missing is a co-ordinated range of support and it calls for Local Authorities to re-model their services to ensure they are joined-up, user-friendly, rooted in the community and flexible enough to reach out to vulnerable older people, irrespective of organisational boundaries and professional demarcations. It recommends local policies and programmes to sustain social contact and independence for as long as possible, low-intensity home services, improved access to suitable housing, home maintenance and repair services and thoughtful planning of local services and transport to help promote independence.
- 3.1.8 The issues raised in these two reports are now being increasingly recognised by all providers of support to older people in that it is not enough simply just to provide for older people's physical needs but it is also essential to give equal priority to their overall emotional and social wellbeing. How Birmingham is responding to this agenda is set out later in this report.

3.2 Growing Older In Birmingham – The Local Context

- 3.2.1 It is important to understand the extent of demographic changes over the next twenty years for Birmingham and the likely impact of an ageing population on housing and housing related services.
- 3.2.2 In 2006 279,500 of Birmingham's residents were aged 50 and over. Population projections produced by the Office for National Statistics indicate that the overall population of Birmingham will increase by 14% over the next twenty years with a significant increase in the number of older



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Figure 1: Birmingham Population Projections by Age Group and Year

Age Group	2006	2011	2016	2021	2026
50-64	142,100	148,100	155,200	164,400	162,500
65-75	69,700	68,700	72,500	74,700	77,300



3.4 Some Practical Implications for Housing

3.4.1 Better quality choices and options for housing will need to be provided for older people in the future to address not only the demographic projections, but also the following issues:

- Many of Birmingham's older residents live in accommodation with at least two spare rooms.
- Around 21% live in homes without central heating.
- The development standards and locations of specialised housing for older people vary considerably, ranging from housing that was originally built for general needs accommodation and subsequently re-designated, to new and recently developed purpose built retirement housing.
- Affluent households are disproportionately leaving the city upon retirement. Older people represented just over a third of Birmingham's 7,900 net out-migrating residents during 2007.
- Birmingham's residents experience higher rates of limiting long-term illness, there appears to be a mismatch of types of supported housing provision for older people available in relation to their housing needs and support that may be necessary.

3.5



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In particular the strategy states:

Priority 6: To expand greatly the provision of extra care housing as a direct replacement for present residential care, as this is the clearly expressed preference of most older people and their carers.

Commissioning intention 6A – Adults and Communities will collaborate with Housing and Registered Social Landlords to develop a network of mixed tenure extra care housing schemes across city. These schemes will progressively replace the Council's existing residential care homes.

Commission intention 6B – Housing and Adults and Communities to review existing extra care and sheltered housing schemes to assess their potential for adaptation to the new model of extra care housing.

Priority 7: Establish equitably across the city a number of [Special] Care Centres that are the focal points for delivering services to older people with a high and/or more complex level of needs. Centres will offer a range of residential and non-residential services.

- 3.5.4 On 16 March 2009, the City Council's Cabinet considered a report which looked at the programme for building Care Centres and closing elderly person's homes and attached day centres. (This is subject to review and a new older people's services commissioning strategy is planned for 2010 – the detail of this is set out in a later section of the report).
- 3.5.5 **Birmingham 2026 - Sustainable Community Strategy** sets the strategic direction and long-term vision for the economic, social and environmental well-being of the city and is the basis for all other strategies in the city. It has been written by the City Council and its partners who make up Be Birmingham, the Local Strategic Partnership. The Local Area Agreement is the delivery plan for the strategy and contains three indicators for delivery relevant to this review:
- Increasing the number of people achieving independent living
 - Tackling fuel poverty in private sector homes
 - Achieving the Decent Homes Standard target for Council and RSL homes
- 3.5.6 **The Council Plan 2008-2013** includes the following priority actions for the 'Be Healthy' objective:

3.5.8 The strategy is aimed at people as young as 50 and has an emphasis on the Council working in partnership to enable people to think ahead and plan future housing options. It is based on four key themes:

- Advice and Information - developing a comprehensive advice and information system for all services and support available for older people.
- Housing Options - providing a broad range of accommodation such as the new extra care villages and refurbished sheltered housing, together with promotion of what housing options can provide.
- Support and Prevention - promoting actions and services to enable older people to remain living independently as possible and raise wellbeing. This includes such actions as progressing the Affordable Warmth and adaptations programmes, and developing a comprehensive range of services to address the gap in low level provision such as gardening.
- Engagement and Community - to ensure older people are fully involved in what is happening in their neighbourhood and encourage people approaching later life to think about their future housing options.

3.5.9 **Be Birmingham Wellbeing Strategy for Older Citizens 2009-2012** (consultation Nov 2008 – March 2009) aims to improve the health and wellbeing of older citizens of Birmingham and is modelled around three main themes of personal, place and social based wellbeing. The implementation of the strategy rests collectively with the Be Birmingham partnership and the Birmingham Health and Wellbeing Partnership. The Director of Public Health will be advising on the prioritisation of the themes to ensure the use of resources is maximised.

3.5.10 **Decent Homes Programme** – The Government introduced the Decent Homes Standard for



4 Current Housing Provision for Older People

4.1.1 Given that the decision has already been made by the City Council to move away from the direct provision of traditional residential care and to develop programme of alternatives, the Review Group concentrated in its evidence collection on exploring how the Council is working towards this goal rather than exploring in detail current residential provision. Home Care Services have also been the subject of a previous scrutiny review so these were also excluded.

4.1.2 The Review Group heard the pattern of future provision is likely to be made up of the following elements:

- High quality residential beds (provided by the independent sector)
- Care Centres to meet the specialist care needs of older people with dementia
- Extra Care (villages and schemes)
- Sheltered Housing
- A wide variety of support to older people living in their own homes based around the following themes:

Improving and maintaining homes e.g. the HouseProud scheme


Improving thermal comfort e.g. the Warm Front programme

Maintaining independence e.g. adaptations, handyperson schemes, floating support

Protecting private tenants e.g. landlord accreditation



What is Sheltered Housing?



an office for the support officer, and the remaining area is unable to accommodate all residents together.

- 5.2.9 The Review Group was advised that the Housing and Constituencies Directorate is engaged in on-going work to upgrade accommodation where that is feasible and the outcomes justify the investment: for example re-modelling schemes to provide two bedroom



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appeal against this and this is heard by an independent panel of officers. This can result in: no case to answer, the introductory tenancy being extended, or possession of the property. If the NOPP is upheld and the breach continues the Council proceeds to court for possession. It must however, be ensured that support is offered for example mediation or referral to a family intervention project if appropriate. The judge's decision will be based on whether the City Council has followed the correct procedure. The process is reinforced in the tenancy conditions.

- 5.2.16 Members were advised that there are seven dedicated local housing ASB teams across Birmingham working with a range of agencies to resolve cases. The Birmingham Anti Social Behaviour Unit (BASBU) is a centrally based multi disciplinary team dedicated to tackling ASB throughout the city. Through a Service Level Agreement BASBU provide housing teams with training, advice and support with complex cases. When a complaint of ASB is received it is given an initial classification (Category C = minor, Category B = serious, Category A = very serious). The investigating officer will gather all relevant information, decide a course of action and arrange appropriate support in accordance with the City Council ASB Procedure.
- 5.2.17 There are a variety of actions that the investigating officer can propose. These range from preventative measures (warnings, Acceptable Behaviour Contacts and mediation), to legal sanctions and enforcement action under the conditions of tenancy (injunctions, Anti-Social Behaviour Orders, possession proceedings). If legal action is proposed the Local Housing Manager instructs Legal Services via BASBU.
- 5.2.18 Working arrangements between the local ASB teams and BASBU are being reviewed.


I



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Service and Support Charges

5.2.32



5.2.38 Members were advised that the Housing Directorate monitors RSL performance against the Nominations Agreement on a quarterly basis and RSLs who are not meeting their targets are



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5.3 Care Centres

What are Care Centres?

- 5.3.1 Birmingham currently has 4 Care Centres which are designed to meet the specialist care needs of older people with dementia and higher level needs, as well as providing advice and therapy services to older people living in the surrounding community. Services are provided by Adults and Communities and the Primary Care Trusts (PCTs) co-located under one roof. Each centre has 32 enablement beds funded by the PCT and 32 care home beds with en-suite bathrooms as well as an assistive technology shop, restaurant, internet café, hair salon, activity rooms, gardens and gym.
- 5.3.2 Care Centres also provide respite care, and care for people who need short term care after leaving hospital. Therefore, they provide both interim and long term residential care along with a range of facilities to maintain the independence of older people.
- 5.3.3 In undertaking the review the Members visited the Norman Power Care Centre and were very impressed with the facilities it provides.

Review of the Commissioning Strategy for Older People's Services

- 5.3.4 The original intention as set out in the Commissioning Strategy for Older People's Services 2005-2010 was to provide a network of Care Centres across the city. However during the course of this review the position was subject to change and on 16 March 2009, the Cabinet considered a report which looked at the programme for building Care Centres and closing elderly person's homes and attached day centres. This report stated that while the commitment to close the elderly person's home's remains the priority, the Council needs to reconsider the speed of the closure programme, while at the same time providing choice and quality. It states that in order to determine the way forward, over the summer and autumn, the Adults and Communities Directorate will undertake a much wider consultation exercise, alongside partners in health and housing, to bring the Older People's Commissioning Strategy up to date, ready for a launch in 2010. This will allow the Council to:
- Test and re-affirm older people's views.
 - Test the Care Centre model, as a key plank of meeting the needs of people with dementia.
 - Address the agenda of 'personalisation'.
- 5.3.5 It states that at the same time the strategy can take account of the current financial position of the Council and the worldwide recession which has had a major impact on the plans to finance capital development schemes through the sale of land available from vacant sites, following the closure of the council run homes for older people.



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- 5.3.6 Given the current economic climate, it is highly likely that capital receipts will be substantially less than envisaged and borrowing costs will remain at around £3.5m (£2.6m after budgeted costs) per year for the near future.
- 5.3.7 Faced with such uncertainty over key elements of the Directorate's financial plan, the preferred option is to propose a pause to the modernisation programme and to continue with the closure of the elderly person's homes identified within Phase 1 of the closure programme so as to provide sufficient revenue budgets for the direct care costs of Care Centres, thereby reducing double running costs. This option retains flexibility of investment within the Directorate at a time of considerable national and local

5.4 Extra Care Housing

What is Extra Care?

5.4.1 Extra Care provides a housing environment for older people with low level care needs – it provides adapted accommodation with flexible on-site care and community facilities.

- **Extra Care Schemes** – The Council currently has 4 extra care schemes and the RSLs have 14 schemes. Schemes offer residents individual homes with their own front door, flexible support from home care staff on site 24 hours a day for those assessed as requiring personal care, as well as communal facilities such as a lounge, laundry, guest room, library and an assisted bathroom.
- **Extra Care Villages** - The proposal is to develop 5 extra care villages in Birmingham in partnership with the ExtraCare Charitable Trust, Housing 21 and Midland Heart Housing Association. The first is under development at New Oscott with an anticipated completion in spring 2010. Extra care villages offer all of facilities of the extra care schemes and in addition they will offer facilities such as a bar and coffee shop, well-being facilities, activity room, gym, computer room and a shop. The facilities can be used by older people living in the wider community.

5.4.2 The City Council is committed to the development of extra care housing. The main thrust of current strategy is to focus on the development of retirement villages built to the Extra Care model. Members were informed that the Council's Extra Care development programme is:

- 2010/2011 - 440 apartments (1 village, 2 schemes)
- 2011/2012 – 260 apartments (1 scheme)
- 2012/2013 – 632 apartments (3 villages, 2 schemes)
- 2013/2014 – 180 apartments (1 village)

5.4.3 Extra care housing offers housing in an environment enhanced to meet the needs of older adults. It is housing with low care needs (and up to low levels of dementia). Step down from hospital is provided in villages with some support from PCTs. It is about improving life quality through facilitation, and encouraging people to look after and support one another, thereby enjoying their own home. Residents are encouraged to become involved in activities contributing to their well-being. The individual units have level access showers, are increasingly 2 beds and can be easily adapted to meet increasing needs of older people. The combination of adapted accommodation and on site care minimises the likelihood of any individual having to move to institutional care regardless of increasing need.

5.4.4 Officers stated that Extra Care housing is seen to be capable of supporting a balanced community that will promote a positive environment for older people. Thus it does not offer a direct replacement for one of the current models: sheltered housing or registered social care, rather it



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spans these categories and provides an environment in which people can age in place and where changing care needs can be accommodated without having to move to an institutional setting.

- 5.4.5 Members were told it is an agreed principle that the extra care villages will have a balance of care needs and will be mixed-tenure (combining units for rent, shared ownership and outright sale) to enable all older citizens to benefit from extra care housing. This is set out in the allocations policy below.

Allocations and Nominations to Extra Care Housing - Allocations policy (as set out in the Council's Allocations Policy January 2009)

- 5.4.6 Applicants for extra care properties must be aged 60 and over with support needs and a balance of care needs. In addition to the normal application process they must have undergone a support needs assessment by the Older Persons Team and will usually have a care needs assessment carried out by a project group that consists of a scheme manager, a senior support officer and a social worker from the Adults and Communities Directorate. This determines the number of hours care an applicant needs per week. This information along with the number of allocation points an applicant has been awarded is taken into account when allocating accommodation in an Extra Care Scheme. Applicants are categorised according to the level of care required.

- 5.4.7

5.4.10 Officers also visited The Pocklington Trust Extra Care Scheme in Birmingham which provides similar facilities on a smaller scale, designed specifically for people with sight loss.

Issues raised by Registered Social Landlords

5.4.11 As part of the evidence taking RSLs raised the following issues with Members:

5.4.12 Some of the RSLs we spoke to mentioned a perceived lack of co-ordination between City Council Directorates in implementing the Extra Care strategy and one was concerned the strategy may not meet future demand for intensive care.

5.4.13 One Association raised concerns about the relationship with Adults and Communities Directorate on assessments and allocations and highlighted the variations between local teams. Despite the Extra Care Partnership Agreement for assessments often allocations were made before that assessment had been carried out due to pressure on the Association to let empty properties quickly.

5.4.14 Members were advised that it was a future aspiration to have a single nominations process with RSLs but there were a number of developments that needed to be set in place first including the roll-out of Choice Based Lettings. A common allocations policy would be considered and there were discussions taking place with RSLs on how that might happen. Integrated computer systems would be needed and this may need to be considered in the next phase of Housing Transformation.

Managing transition

5.4.15 Members were keen to ensure Extra Care offered balanced communities and that during the period of transition all older people had access to the type of specialised accommodation that met their needs and aspirations. Officers pointed out that the closure of the first residential homes in Phase 1 is progressing and their replacement is through a range of measures:

- Care Centres - 4 new centres have been built and are now fully operational
- Extra Care housing and;
- Additional contracted replacement provision from independent suppliers

5.4.16 4 out of 70 residents (6%) have moved into Extra Care from the assessments completed so far. This is within the original estimate that around 10% of residents would move to extra care from existing residential care schemes.

5.4.17 As stated above the allocations policy for Extra Care will need to ensure a balanced community is maintained. This should ensure that extra care does not become a replacement for residential care and that people of all abilities and levels of need will want to live in the schemes. Although Members felt that Priority 6 of the existing Commissioning Strategy for Older People's Services (see paragraph 3.5.3 of this report) should be reviewed to clarify this. Given that changing plans for the pattern of Care Centre provision across the city and the planned review of the



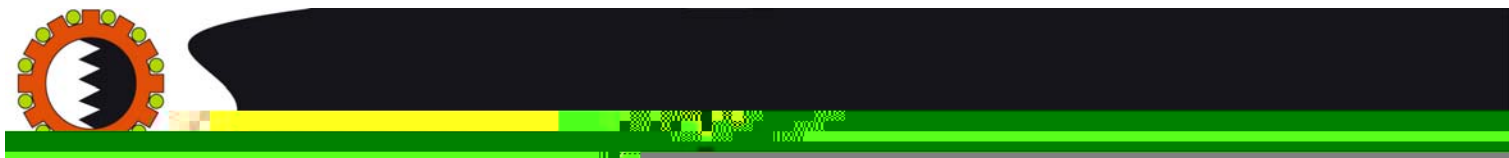
6 Findings – Housing Related Support for Older People in their Own Homes

6.1 Introduction



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- 6.1.6 Members heard that Birmingham has a high proportion of vulnerable households. These are defined by the Government as being households receiving a means tested or a disability related benefit. Under the current economic climate it is anticipated that the number of vulnerable households will increase; a situation over which the Local Authority has no control.
- 6.1.7 The Council's Private Sector Stock Condition Survey undertaken in 2005/2006 showed there were significant issues in relation to housing conditions and vulnerable households. It identified the main cause of failure against the Government's Decent Homes Standard rela




- There was no mechanism put in place to assist applicants who would be required to make a contribution.
- 6.3.9 Members were told that the Council has negotiated with EAGA a protocol and process to assist Birmingham residents who are unable to pay their contribution towards the cost of central heating/boiler replacement.
- 6.3.10 The Council's Safety Net Grant Policy (approved by Council in April 2008) allows the approval of a grant of up to £1,000 where officers are satisfied that:
- There is a category 1 hazard existing within the property – where there is a lack of central heating within the property, this would constitute a category 1 hazard under the “excessive cold” criteria.
 - That the applicant has no other reasonable means of funding the works.
- 6.3.11 Subject to the two requirements above being met, it has been agreed with EAGA that that where the cost of the contribution is less than £475 (net) they can proceed immediately to instruct the contractor to carry out the work. This process provides a fast track mechanism for over 80% of the cases that EAGA deal with in Birmingham.
- 6.3.12 For those cases where the contribution is in excess of £475, these are referred to the Council in order that officers can visit the property, to be satisfied that that the quotation provides value for money and is appropriate for the applicant's needs. The team has an internal target to deal with any such request within 10 working days. Where it is deemed that the costs are appropriate (in line with the tendered costs), EAGA are instructed to carry out the works.
- 6.3.13 Subject to completion of the applicant's benefits check and agreement for EAGA to share their customer details with the Council, no applicant should have to wait longer than 10 working days



Targeting older people without central heating

- 6.3.17 The Review Group noted with concern the proportion of older people in Birmingham identified by the 2001 Census as living without central heating and questioned whether there was any engagement with residents to address that in the context of affordable warmth schemes. Officers stated that Census figures were likely to be out of date and did not take account of initiatives including the Decent Homes Programme and Affordable Warmth Programme which would have impacted on that situation. Programmes were cross-tenure and those living in the private sector had benefited predominately. It was agreed it was important to ensure that residents were fully aware of the options available and that the assistance was targeted to vulnerable older people living in non-decent housing conditions.
- 6.3.18 Members made reference to the Private Sector Housing Condition survey and to the estimated cost to make properties decent. In relation to the Health Through Warmth programme it was noted that less than a 1000 cases per year had been completed since the scheme started in 2001 and concerns were voiced about the ability of this programme to respond to the need for thermal comfort improvements for older people.
- 6.3.19



6.3.22 Members were advised that regulated (FSA) financial advice is provided by the Council. This means that an assessment is made to ensure the correct loan product is recommended that



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City-wide handyman scheme

6.4.13 During 2009 Birmingham successfully bid for a Department for Communities and Local Government grant for handyman services (2009/2010 - £150k, 2010/11 - £220k). This is specifically for the older people client group.

6.4.14 The Birmingham model proposes the following:

- To part fund a coordinator function (to be located in the Housing Directorate) to coordinate and prioritise all requests for handymen services and act as a single point of entry.
- To coordinate, monitor and quality control all handymen services.
- To part fund a hospital discharge scheme to make the homes habitable with minor repair works and prevention work relating to trips, slips and falls.
- To facilitate minor adaptations works e.g. putting up grab rails.
- To promote community based social enterprise schemes (however they will receive referrals via the coordinator function).

6.4.15 It was suggested that the funding available for the handyman service could be a catalyst to explore the potential for social enterprise handyman schemes. Officers informed the Review Group that the handyman service was being discussed at the Supporting People Strategy Group with there being a working group involving the third sector, housing etc. which demonstrated a joined-up approach.

6.4.16 Members noted that with the move to individualised budgets there was a need to be mindful when engaging with the third sector of the risks of overprovision of services. Some concerns were raised that the provision of grant aid could conflict with individualised budgets.

Moving-on incentives

6.4.17 The City Council is currently piloting a scheme to provide support and assistance to older people to move from family-sized housing into smaller/extra care/sheltered housing. This includes advice on finding a suitable property and hands-on support to organise the move such as arranging removals, disconnection and reconnection of services etc.

6.4.18 This approach will be further developed in the co



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6.4.20 BACOP representatives thought more could be done to build upon the initiatives that the Council has taken with its own housing stock by providing incentives and support to older people living in private sector housing who may need assistance for them to move from larger housing into accommodation more suitable to their needs.

Floating support

6.4.21 This involves providing support to older people who live in their own homes. Currently 60 people have been assisted by a pilot scheme. The plan is that this will be to be rolled out cross-tenure in the future. The Housing and Constituencies Directorate wants to start developing a service for Asian elders and therefore will be targeting Sparkbrook and Washwood Heath areas of the city in the next phase.

6.4.22 Members were interested to hear about the plans to expand floating support. There had been concerns raised by some witnesses that the City Council was using this model in its sheltered housing but Members were advised that no sheltered housing scheme currently receives a floating support service.

Protecting private sector tenants

6.4.23 Members acknowledged that the private rented sector is not just made up of just students and young families and there are a number of older people living in private rented properties. Officers advised that the Council offers advice and assistance for private tenants to seek to improve thermal comfort and works with private landlords to ensure appropriate standards through education and accreditation. 550 landlords had been accredited to date. The Council is also responsible for inspection and licensing of Houses of Multiple Occupation to assess condition and risk and has issued 1,100 licenses to date.

Impact of housing related support for older people

6.4.24 Members referred to the figures reported on the number of households improved and commented that at the current rate of progress it could take some 25 years to address all the properties requiring improvement.

6.4.25 It was explained that in addition to the measures outlined there were mainstream schemes operating which had seen around 5,700 properties per year being dealt with. Nevertheless Members recognised the extent of the challenge faced particularly in the light of the economic downturn and the expected increase in the number of vulnerable households. It was therefore important to explore and secure all available sources of funding and to target those resources to areas of greatest need.

6.4.26 It was suggested that a major capital investment programme could be one way of addressing the rate of improvement.

6.4.27 Members were advised that good practice has been acknowledged by the Audit Commission in the recent Strategic Housing Inspection including:



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Reducing bureaucracy

- 6.4.34 Representatives from the older persons groups asked if various forms could be standardised and made less complex. It was also felt that the bureaucracy associated with the aids and adaptations assessment process could be simplified and they voiced support for the proposals for individual budgets which would allow people to access retail outlets for equipment.
- 6.4.35 Not all older people understood why some of the forms used asked for so much detail on personal finances.



Issues regarding Telecare and Careline

- 6.5.15 Members saw a range of assistive technology devices including the 'Just Checking System' that uses wireless movement sensors to log a person's daily activity and relay information via a secure website to family members, wireless remotely controlled pill dispenser that generates telephone reminder if not used, and bed /chair occupancy sensor.
- 6.5.16 It was noted that these devices could save significant staff cost as they replace the need for carers to visit throughout the day.
- 6.5.17 Officers advised that Birmingham had a Department of Health target to install 3,000 pieces of telecare by March 2009 and in April 2006 the Department of Health had allocated Birmingham a £1.8m Preventative Technology Grant to invest in telecare to support individuals in the community. The focus of the grant was to reduce blue light emergency services calls, hospital admissions and delayed hospital discharges. Telecare monitoring could generate data from alarm calls that could be analysed and translated in individual care packages.
- 6.5.18 Members were told that Telecare equipment can be monitored via pager units and small residential homes use this method of monitoring. It is not however linked to the Council's Careline control centre for monitoring.
- 6.5.19 The Council provides the Careline Service managed by the Older Persons Team. Currently there are links to:
- 6151 dispersed units
 - 1800 BCC linked bungalows
 - 1360 RSL properties
 - 363 other dispersed units (hostels etc.)
- 6.5.20 Members heard in the early stages of the review that the technology for the Careline service was dated and would not support additional services that telecare can offer. However the Review Group now acknowledge improvements have been made and Careline has been upgraded to a system which can support the monitoring of assistive technology, which includes fall detectors (some are already connected to the system), temperature sensors, wandering alerts, flood detectors, bogus door contacts and inactivity monitors. The system is already being used successfully in other parts of the country for this purpose. Careline has also recently been awarded Telecare Services Accreditation, which recognises the high quality of both technology and customer service.
- 6.5.21 The Adults and Communities Directorate is in discussion with NHS Direct as an element of the Assistive Technology Strategy to enable NHS Direct to provide a telephone response service and also a triage service to avoid admissions to hospital via A&E. A range of technological innovations will then be offered to older people including extreme temperature sensors, fall detectors and in appropriate cases, epilepsy monitoring equipment. It is expected that this innovation will



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contribute to the Adults and Communities Transformation Programme to extend the service to a larger group of citizens.

- 6.5.22 If negotiations with NHS Direct are successful, the City Council will explore how the new arrangements can be used to support and enhance the service provided by Careline.
- 6.5.23 Members looked forward to receiving more details on the implementation of the Assistive Technology Strategy and the work to create a comprehensive and cost effective system of telecare that addressed the current incompatibility of some systems.

Maintaining social contact

- 6.5.24 Members were keen to ensure that technology was used to give people more choice about whether to have carers visit them throughout the day or not. They were however mindful of the importance of maintaining social interaction for older people. In addition technology should not be used to replace personal care services. Equipment should be used to identify and take away risks associated with older person living independently and provide peace of mind for the family.



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Improvements highlighted included the way in which the programme and budget were organised and managed and recognition was given to the work undertaken with service users.

7.1.9 Of the £50m programme £8.2m is allocated to the funding of housing related support services to approximately 25,000 older people. The following table shows spend for 2008/2009. Currently 45 organisations provide these services.

Figure 9: Supporting People Spend (Older People) 2008/2009

Service Type	Deliveries	Forecast spend £'000s 2008/2009
Accommodation based schemes	Sheltered Housing	54,878
	Very Sheltered Housing	948,294
	Alms Houses	7,059
	Sheltered Housing	5,054,534
	Supported Housing (shared or self contained)	172,118
	Very Sheltered Housing	276,863
Sub-total accommodation		6,513,746
Floating Support		824,454
Community or social alarm service		706,411
Home Improvement Agency (HIA) Service		69,666
Total		8,114,278

7.1.10 The way in which the Supporting People grant can be spent is determined against an eligibility criteria. The Department for Communities and Local Government specify that the money can only be used for housing related support, i.e. not for health or care services, housing management functions nor social activities. The grant conditions do not stipulate where and how services can be delivered, but Birmingham City Council and its partners on the Commissioning Body are expected to ensure that money is spent in accordance with its strategic priorities and to ensure maximum benefit to the vulnerable people in the city.

7.2 New Supporting People Commissioning and Procurement Process

need, dovetail with and support other strategic priorities, and add value and underpin the statutory and third sector service provision in the city.

- 7.2.3 These reviews will develop a commissioning strategy for each client group, which will form the basis of detailed service specifications. The commissioning strategy for services to older people was due to be finalised by the end of February 2009.
- 7.2.4 The Review Group examined the commissioning and procurement process in some detail, including the Value for Money matrix used in the assessments.
- 7.2.5 The first stage of the process consisted of a Performance Evaluation Test (PET) to establish the organisational competency of providers and determine which would be invited to submit a tender in the negotiation stage. Following submission of self-assessment information by the provider an on-site validation visit is carried out by a team involving service user representatives and staff. A PET score was awarded to each provider and any that achieved a poor rating were excluded from proceeding and decommissioned.
- 7.2.6 At the negotiation stage bids are assessed against the key principles set by the Commissioning Body and using a value for money matrix to plot quality and cost. Contracts will be awarded to the best performing providers, who have demonstrated competence, quality and value for money.
- 7.2.7 Members were advised that the contract negotiation process for the client group containing services to older people was expected to start in June 2009 and conclude by September 2009.
- 7.2.8 Members were keen to ensure that the commissioning process was fair and did not adversely affect smaller organisations who might need support and guidance to participate in the process, and that assessment arrangements were robust.
- 7.2.9 Officers explained the PET process was not only based on written submissions but also a field work/validation stage involving service users. The key principles agreed by the Commissioning Body included the aim to retain the diversity of provision and ensure that small providers were not 'squeezed out' of the process. There was also a moderation process of the PET rating scores and providers were given written feedback and that would offer them an opportunity to raise queries.

7.3 Review Group Issues

Market capacity

- 7.3.1 Members were keen to know about the outcome of the bidding process in terms of quality and value for money. They also asked if an assessment of the market had been conducted prior to developing commissioning strategies. Officers advised that an analysis had been undertaken which had established that a significant number of providers were third sector organisations and only a small number were commercial concerns.
- 7.3.2 Members questioned whether capacity in the market had been determined and whether services would be affected by competition, perhaps from other Local Authorities.



At commissioning level

- 8.1.6 The Joint Commissioning Group has senior officer representation from both Directorates.
- 8.1.7 The Audit Commission report following the inspection of the Supporting People Programme in 2007 contained several recommendations relating to strengthening the engagement of Adults and Communities in the programme. As a result a joint commissioning post has been established to work across the two Directorates on the programme. The jointly funded post is assisting in the ongoing developments for the programme.

At operational level


- 8.1.8 Staff from both Directorates work closely on a number of its work streams on the Older Adults Modernisation Board (which is working on the remodelling of residential care). Extra care housing is a key plank within the Commissioning Strategy and is integral to the decommissioning of the current residential care stock and the provision of housing choices in the future. The future policy direction needs to be agreed through the governance arrangements in place for Older People's Modernisation. This arrangement includes both Cabinet Members.
- 8.1.9 There are also joint working arrangements for the assessment and provision of aids and adaptations for independent living. This includes implementation of the new assessment process for the Independent Living Service as agreed by Cabinet.

8.2 Review Group Issues

- 8.2.1 Members discussed the following issues in relation to the level of joint working between the two Directorates.

Impact of individualised budgets

- 8.2.2 Members noted that the self directed care, individualised budget agenda will switch the power to commission services over to the individual service user. This may need to be managed very




stated that commissioning processes were joint and, while resources were not yet pooled, the Local Area Agreement (LAA) would be a driver for this as there were partnership targets relating to independent living. She also made reference to the work of the Health and Wellbeing Partnership Executive. Members felt that shared resources were needed and that this should be progressed. The Acting Strategic Director highlighted the extent of joint commissioning



9 Conclusions and Recommendations

9.1 Joint Working and Strategies

- 9.1.1 The ageing society poses a significant housing challenge because as the numbers of older people increase the level of demand on care and support services will intensify and this will put a



propose. For example it is not really clear at the moment when the Wellbeing Strategy will be finalised and it is therefore unclear how it will be owned and how its actions will be resourced

- 9.1.4 Of perhaps more significance is the fact that as the Review Group was completing its work it was announced that as a result of the Recession the Commissioning Strategy for Older People's
- 9.1.4



9.2 Involvement of Older People/Information About Services

9.2.1 It is clear that to be able to make the right choices older people need easy access to up to date clear, comprehensive and accessible information on the housing /support options that are available to them. This is an issue that has been identified at both a national level in the National Strategy for Housing in an Ageing Society and at a local level via consultation undertaken by both the Housing and Constituencies Directorate as part of the Planning for Housing in Later Life Strategy and by the Adults and Communities Directorate as part of its ongoing work to develop its services. This message was also endorsed by the older people's groups who met with the Review Group. The key issues here are:

- The need for better co-ordination of information from all providers – one suggestion was that a guidebook for older people which set out both their rights as well as the full range of services available to them might be produced. Other suggestions included establishing a one stop shop or single contact number.
- The need to advertise/ market services for older people more and make the information accessible to all.
- The need to provide access to advocacy and support assistance to older people to engage them with local authority services and other agencies.

9.2.2 This is not to say that there is not plenty of very good information out there on specific programmes and schemes (such as the HouseProud DVD and the wide range of information provided by the Assist Birmingham Centre) but that it needs to be all pulled together irrespective of the provider into a city-wide comprehensive advice service. The Review Group welcomed the progress that is being made by the two Directorates on this issue.

9.2.3 In addition both of the older people's groups wanted to see greater involvement of older people in the decision making processes within the Directorates. The Review Group however recognised that progress is being made on this matter and noted the good practice employed in terms of involvement of older people in the development of the recent Planning for Housing in Later Life Strategy. However the connections between the range of different strategies relating to older people services was not always clear and they felt that communication on this could be improved.



9.4 Extra Care

- 9.4.1 The Review Group was very impressed with the plans for the provision of Extra Care Schemes and Villages across the city and it welcomed the very real addition to the choice and quality of housing provision and facilities for older people in Birmingham from all tenures that they will deliver. Members recognised that the allocation arrangements for these schemes will be the key to their success as these very directly influence the age and care profile of the resident groups within the schemes. Nomination arrangements need to be carefully considered at an early stage and be flexible enough to enable the profile of the extra care community to be managed effectively to fulfil their objectives.
- 9.4.2 Since extra care housing is a fusion of housing and care, it is important that there is clarity as to its role in responding to the sometimes competing pressures of care and housing needs.
- 9.4.3 Members heard the City Council is keen to ensure that there is a wide variety of older people with a balanced spectrum of needs within each village scheme. It is therefore essential that both Directorates work closely together to ensure that Extra Care Villages are able in practice to deliver the mixed communities of need that are essential to the Extra Care principle.
- 9.4.4 This must not be allowed to be compromised as a result of the changing plans for Care Centre provision in the city that might arise as a result of the current review.

	Recommendation	Responsibility	Completion Date
R8	That the Cabinet Members for Adults and Communities and Housing work closely together in respect of the nomination policy to ensure that the principle of mixed communities of need in Extra Care schemes is maintained and report back to scrutiny on how this will be practically delivered, given the doubts surrounding the level of future Care Centre provision that might now be available.	Cabinet Members for Adults and Communities and Housing	March 2010

9.5 Housing Related Support for Older People in Their Own Homes

- 9.5.1 Most older people prefer to remain in their own homes for as long as possible but as their health and mobility declines they may need some extra help to enable them to remain living independently. In addition it has been estimated that older people's falls cost the NHS £3¼bn a year as well as often precipitating a permanent move to a care home. Making minor home safety modifications can ensure many falls are prevented. It is clear therefore that providing some preventative measures and practical support for older people in their own homes can have




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significant wellbeing and budgetary benefits. Members heard about the range of services and support available from the two Directorates for older people living in their own homes. This included Adults and Communities provision of care packages based upon assessed need and Housing and Constituencies initiatives aimed at improving and maintaining homes, improving thermal comfort, maintaining independence and protecting private tenants. Members particularly welcomed the joint working between the Directorates that will result in the development of a city-wide handypersons scheme.

9.5.2 Members heard that the Private Sector Stock Condition survey conducted in 2005/6 found that a high proportion of that housing stock failed the Government's Decent Homes Standard. It was also noted that a large number of vulnerable households live in non decent housing stock. The most common cause of failure to meet the standard is identified as being related to thermal comfort issues. The Council coordinates a range of interventions to help to address non decency in the private sector however it has no direct control over the take up of these initiatives. Members were keen to ensure that measures were taken to enhance the targeting of assistance particularly of thermal comfort measures to vulnerable older people and looked forward to hearing the results of 2009/10 Private Sector Housing Stock Condition Survey which would give an up to date assessment of the current position and enable consideration to be given to new methods of measuring the impact of assistance provided.

	Recommendation	Responsibility	Completion Date
R9	That the Cabinet Member for Housing enhances the targeting of assistance, in particular thermal comfort measures, to t 27 Tu9qthat will rcttttttti t4(h)1(e .66 Oe Cabi.45gtttsib)-4ta.5(to l370.38 4178 new me(to l31e(to lures, to) ne3to lur.y w .470.00 3456(fla		



required nationally) is being undertaken to award future contracts. The contract negotiation process for services to older people will conclude in September 2009.

9.6.3 In addition the ring fence that ensured that the Supporting People resources could only be used for housing support is being removed and in future the resources would be part of the Local Area Agreement.

9.6.4



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interaction. The Council's Assistive Technology Strategy is being developed to ensure that this balance is maintained and that appropriate systems are fully utilised.

	Recommendation	Responsibility	Completion Date
R13	The Cabinet Member for Adults and Communities reports to the Housing and Urban Renewal and the Adults and Communities O&S Committees on progress on implementation of the action plan for the Assistive Technology Strategy, including proposals for monitoring equipment and actions taken to ensure social interaction for older people is maintained.	Cabinet Member for Adults and Communities	March 2010
R14	That progress towards the achievements of these recommendations is reported to the Housing and Urban Renewal O&S Committee in April 2010 in consultation with the Adults and Communities O&S Committee. The Committee will schedule subsequent progress reports thereafter, until all recommendations are implemented.	Cabinet Members for Adults and Communities and Housing	