Population Ageing Inquiry

Housing Opportunities & Challenges for Local Government

Practical Housing Solutions

Sue Adams, CEO, Care & Repair England
Local Government: At the heart

Duties and functions include:
- Planning the built environment
- Public health
- Social Care
- Housing supply and stock condition
- Housing related services
  - Eg *Duties concerning home adaptations (DFG) and community equipment, information & advice across housing, care & finance*
Local Government: Opportunities

- **Planning** – are we planning places that enable health, inclusive ageing?

- **Public health** – connection made to housing/planning?

- **Social Care** - prevention & health: Is housing in there?

- **Housing supply and stock condition** – taking the longer view on quality of stock and connection to health and social care plus well-being of citizens

- **Housing related services** – opportunity to link to health & care/ pool resources/ do what works eg home adaptations, information & advice enabling self help
Ageing is not a disaster

- It is a social change, not a catastrophe (unless we fail to change the way we do things)
- Older people are making a huge contribution to communities (back bone of volunteering/cross generational support/institutions etc)
- Most need little from LA’s for most of life
Reality – where older people live

- 7 million* older households
- Live in c. third of all homes
- 500,000 specialist housing units

* UK statistics
Reality – where older people live

- **75-77% owner occupier**
- **17-19% social rental**
- **4/6% private rental**
Older people – housing type

- 90% mainstream
- 5% specialist
- 5% res care/ other
Homes good for ageing?

Stock Condition

- 22% of homes still fail to meet the Decent Homes standard
- Low income older homeowners over-represented in non-decent homes

Health Consequences

- Poor housing costs the NHS at least £1.3 billion a year due to hazards in the home and medical problems associated with fuel poverty and energy inefficiency (Nichol 2014)
Homes good for ageing?

Adaptability

- Only 4% of homes meet four basic standards* (25% have none)
- Newer homes – smaller, often less adaptable

* Level access, flush threshold, wide doors & circulation space, WC at entrance level

Consequences

- **Falls**
  1 in 3 (65yrs+) and 1 in 2 (80yrs+) falls each year - home the most common place
- **Loss of independence/dignity**/ more reliant on others
- **Higher** care costs
# Common conditions affecting people 65yrs +

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Common conditions</th>
<th>Incidence</th>
<th>Adaptation enabling independence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arthritis</td>
<td>50 %</td>
<td>Grab rails/ bathroom / stairlift/ equipment eg kitchen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cataracts and other visual degeneration</td>
<td>26 %</td>
<td>Better lighting, colour contrast decoration etc</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mobility problems / daily living tasks difficult</td>
<td>35 %</td>
<td>Grab rails/ bathroom / stairlift/ equipment eg kitchen</td>
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*Source: Audit Commission (2004), Assistive Technology*
Opportunity to change focus

- Housing focus has been primarily on social rented stock – Integration with health, means need to look across tenure and quality of all housing

- Care Act and Public Health - Remit means looking afresh at housing stock condition and suitability

- Misconceptions about disadvantage - Low income home owners outnumber low income tenants, 50% of equity in London and SE
Practical Housing Linked Solutions

- Most older people happy where they live
- Most don’t need any help, some ‘just that bit’ of practical help
- Need impartial information to make a choice (external pressures) – no ‘right’ way for all
Good Example: West of England

West of England Care & Repair
- Joint commission by four LAs
- Handyperson service
- Carry out larger repairs and adaptations
- Safety/ security/ warmth checks/ remedial work
- Practical support to enable people to come home from hospital safely
WECR Prevention and Self help

- **Housing Options** information & advice
- **Mutual support** by older volunteers (Silverlinks) plus planning ahead workshops
- **Practical help to move** or prepare / repair/ adapt own home for future
- **Trusted contractors** list
- **Home Independence Centres**
  
  www.wecr.org.uk
Good Example: Nott & Notts

Age UK Nottingham and Nottinghamshire

- HIA, handyperson home safety service - repairs & adaptations
- Options information and advice – a FirstStop partner - & support to move home all tenures
- Hospital advocacy service and befriending
- Peer to peer & planning ahead - Silverlinks project
Good Example: Middlesbrough

LA HIA relocated to be part of Social Services

- Reactive repairs & adaptations *but also more prevention focus*
- FirstStop information and advice partner – *shift to holistic service eg hospital discharge planning, GP link, sustaining independence*
- Taken on CCG telecare contract, working on dementia

www.middlesbrough.gov.uk/spa
Silverlinks

- **Connecting** older people facing life changing housing decisions

- **Workshops, Training**—Housing Options, Thinking ahead

- **Blog**
  silverlinksprogramme.wordpress.com/
In Common

- **Innovating, responding imaginatively to change, taking risks**
- Focus on prevention as well as reaction to crisis
- Enabling self help & encouraging thinking ahead
- Working across health, housing and social care eg. *Living Safely & Well at Home* outreach
- Impartiality – trust - focussed on older people themselves
Recognising what people want

- LA’s role to promote a shared aim across health, housing & social care?

“Enable positive, healthy & active ageing at home”
LOCAL AUTHORITIES: 3 Key Steps

HERE & NOW
- Enable older people to make informed choices *eg I&A to straddle housing/care/finance, Display Centres, planning ahead*
- Enable older people to maintain, repair & adapt their homes - making best use of their own resources if they have them, financial help if on low incomes, alongside practical housing help with building work

TAKING THE LONGER VIEW – Planning for ageing
- Build *all new homes* to lifelong, healthy, adaptable quality & standards
- Build a *variety* of new specialist housing for older people

*Most of these require minimal or no extra public expenditure but result in significant financial gains*
Who?

- **Care & Repair England;** national housing charity aims to address poor and unsuitable housing conditions amongst the older population, particularly low income home owners (est. 1986)

- **Pioneers local initiatives;** local Care & Repair services, Handyperson, Housing Options Info & Advice, Healthy Homes, Older People’s “Housing Action”

- **Policy shaping:** Older people’s housing – Chair Housing & Ageing Alliance, Home Adaptations Consortium, HCA, DCLG, NHS England Integration Task Group, DH Care Legislation
Contacts

- info@careandrepair-england.org.uk
- silverlinksprogramme.wordpress.com/
  (new website in the new year........)
- Older People’s Housing Champions
  housingactionblog.wordpress.com/
- Impartial information and advice - FirstStop
  www.firststopcareadvice.org.uk
  TEL: 0800 377 7070