

Age Friendly Homes

Supporting Independence and Choice

Stoke-on-Trent
Older People's Housing Strategy 2014-19

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Foreword

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1.0 Introduction

The city's first Older People's Housing and Accommodation Strategy was published in 2008, it helped raise the profile of older people's housing issues and led to a much better understanding of local needs. Based on supply and demand mapping research undertaken in 2007, it set out the challenges for health, social care and housing services arising from population forecasts which anticipated a growing number of older people and the associated likelihood of an increase in long term health conditions, physical and mental frailty.

The Older People's Housing Strategy 2014-19 is based upon the findings and recommendations of supply and demand mapping research undertaken in 2012. The research reassesses current and future housing demand in respect of older people in Stoke-on-Trent based upon population forecasts, long term health conditions and other specialist support needs. The research has been enhanced by extensive consultation with local older people, partners and other stakeholders and together they provide a robust evidence base to inform the updated strategy and to make recommendations in relation to priorities going forward.

Implementation and delivery of the strategy will be directed by the Older People's Housing Strategy Steering Group, a multi-agency/ multi-disciplinary group including representation from statutory, private and voluntary sector organisations, of particular importance has been the input of EngAGE and the Stoke-on-Trent Fifty+ Forum. Members of the group have come together with shared values and vision and their input has been integral to the development and direction of this strategy.

2.0 Executive Summary

The Older People's Housing Strategy 2014-19, builds upon progress made meeting the housing and support needs of older people in Stoke-on-Trent, as set out in the Older People's Housing and Accommodation Strategy 2008-12. It includes the findings from the Supply and Demand Mapping Research undertaken in 2012 and is informed by consultation undertaken in 2013 with local older people, partners and other stakeholders. The strategy also provides information in relation to demographic forecasts and epidemiological factors within the older population which will affect future demand for age friendly housing which includes, supported housing schemes, bungalows, specially adapted homes, homes built to lifetime homes standard as well as support services which enable older people to stay healthier and independent for longer.

The overarching aims of the strategy are to:

- Raise the profile of older people's housing issues within the context of the of the council's strategic vision, the **Mandate for Change**.

- Provide the strategic platform from which future investment decisions can be made.
- Inform and influence the decisions of partners and agencies which have responsibility for commissioning and delivering new housing provision and support services for older people.
- Provide an overview of the progress made over the past five years against the key objectives of the 2008-2012 strategy.
- Ensure progress is made in relation to the delivery of the strategic objectives and associated outcomes of the Older People's Housing Strategy 2014-19.

Key Findings – Supply and Demand Mapping Research 2012

The predominant conclusion of the Older People's Housing, Supply and Demand Mapping Research 2012, is that the housing aspirations of older people in Stoke-on-Trent have remained largely unchanged since 2007. There continues to be a strong preference for older people to remain independent in their own home for longer, for homes that are flexible enough to take account of changing needs as people age, for more choice in relation to supported housing options, for a wider range of support services and improved housing information and advice services enabling older people to make an informed choice about their housing options. More specifically the research highlights the following:

- There continues to be an undersupply of supported housing suitable for the needs of older people.
- The number of older people is set to increase particularly those in the over 79+ age group; this includes those with a physical and/or mental frailty as well as other long term health conditions.
- There is a significant need for more help maintaining homes including adaptations to support older people to maintain their independence and remain in their homes for longer.
- There is a need for more accessible and clearer information about housing options and allocations criteria relating to age specific accommodation (particularly retirement/ extra care)¹ and a more focussed approach is needed to raising awareness of the services available to support independent living within the private sector particularly the availability of home loan and equity release schemes.
- There is a need for better designed homes which are flexible enough to support the changing needs of people as they age.
- There is a need for financial advice and practical support to assist older people in the public and private sector to move to more suitable accommodation.

¹ The term retirement and extra care accommodation are used interchangeably throughout this document.

Progress in Delivering the Older People's Housing and Accommodation Strategy 2008-12

Significant progress has been made over the past 5 years in increasing the supply of age friendly homes in the city with a total of 326 units of new accommodation being delivered since 2008 and a further 470 units of retirement/ extra care provision due for completion by 2016. Taking into account this new provision; the 2012 research shows that due to forecast demographic changes there will still be an undersupply of supported housing, with a total of 921 additional units of accommodation required by 2021.

In terms of updating the strategy, the findings of the Supply and Demand Mapping Research 2012, combined with the outcome of consultation with older people in 2012/13 supports the decision to retain the four priorities of the 2008-12 going forward.

The four priorities are to:

- 1. Deliver a choice of new, appropriate, high quality affordable housing options which enable older people to live as independently as possible.**

The ambition for the city is to continue to increase the supply of affordable new housing in those areas of the city with least supply and to provide accommodation which meets the design standards appropriate for people in later life and which also offers flexible support options.

- 2. Improve existing accommodation choices and neighbourhoods, providing age friendly communities where older people feel in control, safe and secure.**

The quality of existing housing and the importance of feeling safe and secure in their neighbourhoods plays a major part in promoting health and well-being for older people. In recognition of this, the strategy places particular emphasis on the provision of appropriate aids and adaptations enabling older people to remain independent at home. It also identifies the resources being made available to reduce levels of disrepair and improve energy efficiency in the private sector.

- 3. Provide appropriate seamless support services to enable people to remain in their own homes for as long as possible and to assist people to move where this is appropriate.**

The preference of the majority of older people is to remain in their own homes for as long as possible. The current pressures on revenue spending increases the need to focus on the integration and co-ordination of support and advice services through co-operative working practices and to investigate the potential of bringing together a range of funding streams to deliver comprehensive support services. A key element of the strategy is therefore to review existing ways of working and to identify mechanisms for delivering services which are in-keeping with the values and ethos of co-operative working practices.

4. Improve the information available about the housing and support options available to older people and ensure that there is clear and trusted advice about how to access it.

As well as facilitating the delivery of new supported housing and the practical measures involved in improving existing housing and support services; a key aim of the strategy is to encourage more people to plan earlier for their housing moves and to have a good knowledge of the types of housing that best suits their needs and aspirations, combined with an understanding of the support services available to help them stay independent at home or to move to more appropriate accommodation. The strategy therefore identifies the need to bring together the collective knowledge available in the city and to raise awareness of the housing options available to as many older people as possible.

Implementing the Older People's Housing Strategy 2014-19

In order to deliver the strategy, a four year plan has been developed which identifies the key actions and outputs to be delivered on an annual basis to achieve the four priorities of the strategy; the action plan is a working document which will be reviewed and amended over the four year period.

Implementation of the strategy including the delivery of the associated action plan is dependent upon a number of factors not least the support and guidance provided by the Older People's Housing Strategy Steering Group and the commitment of a range of partners, public, private and third sector in allocating appropriate resources to older people's housing issues. Key measures have been identified to monitor the success of the strategy and its implementation will be reviewed regularly to ensure that actions remain timely and appropriate to local need.

3.0 Structure and Framework for the Strategy

The Older People's Housing Strategy 2014-19 is aligned to the **Mandate for Change** which represents the council's overarching strategic objectives to become a great working city; the Older People's Strategy focuses particularly on two of the council's strategic aims, these are to:

- Make Stoke-on-Trent a Great Place to Live in and
- Promote Independence and Healthy Lives.

The strategic priorities of the strategy reflect the findings and recommendations of the Supply and Demand Mapping Research 2012 and are outlined in the Executive Summary in Section 2.0 above and discussed in more detail in section 9.0 of the strategy.

A draft action plan has been developed to direct the implementation of the Older People's Housing Strategy 2014-19 and can be found in Appendix C of this document. The action plan will form the basis for the implementation of the Older People's Strategy going forward and will be reviewed by the Older People's Housing Strategy Steering Group on an annual basis.

Stakeholder Feedback - The strategic priorities and action plan has been informed by consultation with a range of partners including local older people. Older people were asked about their housing needs and aspirations, as well as the type of support services they would prefer as part of the Supply and Demand Mapping Research 2012 and in a separate consultation exercise supported by EngAGE and the Fifty + Forum were also asked if they agreed with the proposed priorities of the draft strategy document. More detailed information on the consultation process can be found in Appendix B.

Resources - The strategy identifies the resources it is anticipated will be available to enable the successful delivery of the strategy, from a range of sources including the public, private and voluntary sectors. Section 6.0 provides information on committed expenditure to 2019 and section 11.0 gives an overview of potential sources of funding and local authority spend in 2014/15.

Measuring Success, Monitoring Review and Reporting - This section identifies the set of outcomes and measures against which the Older People’s Housing Strategy 2014-19 will be monitored and reported.

Glossary of Terms, Definition of Housing Types and Key Contacts are provided for information.

Appendix A - Provides links to key policies, strategies and plans.

Appendix B - Feedback from consultation processes undertaken as part of the Supply and Demand Mapping Research 2012.

Appendix C – Draft Action Plan 2014-19.

4.0 Review of Progress since 2008-12

Significant progress has been made in improving housing options for older people since 2008, 222 units of supported accommodation and 104 two bedroom bungalows have been delivered. A further 470 units of extra care provision are due for completion by 2016. A breakdown of supported housing schemes and bungalow provision developed over the life of the 2008-12 strategy is provided below.

Supported Housing Schemes Developed by Registered Providers 2008 - 2012

	Accommodation Type	Build Year	Number of Units	Property Type	Electoral Ward
Rowan Village	Retirement Village	2008	75	60 2 bed flats; 15 1 bed flats.	Meir North
Alhambra Court	Sheltered Housing (Category 2)	2010	30	30 2 bed flats; 4 2 bed bungalows	Lightwood North and Normacot

West End Village	Retirement Village	2011	100	100 2 bed flats	Booth and Oak Hill
The Pavillion (West End Village)	Retirement Village	2012	12	12 2 bed flats	Booth and Oak Hill
Total			222		

Bungalows developed 2008 – 2012

Electoral Ward	Shared Ownership	Social Rent	Total
Abbey Hulton and Townsend	6	36	42
Blurton West and Newstead		17	17
Burslem Central		5	5
Etruria and Hanley		3	3
Great Chell and Packmoor		5	5
Meir North	5	18	23
Weston Coyney	1	8	9
Total	12	96	104

Whilst this new provision goes some way to addressing the undersupply of age specific accommodation, the 2012 research shows that there is still an undersupply of supported housing, with a total of 921 additional units of supported accommodation required by 2021. In order to address this gap in provision it will be necessary to maximise the investment opportunities available over the next 5 years targeting new provision in areas identified by the research as having least supply and/or high demand and where appropriate, providing a choice of tenure options. The Supply and Demand Mapping Research also recommends that the development of bungalows remains a strategic housing priority for the council as these continue to be the most popular choice of housing for older households (particularly for those households interested in downsizing) and a further targeted investment in this type of accessible accommodation offers an opportunity to deliver a more even spread of provision across the city.

Government policy is beginning to be more encouraging in terms of providing funding for new housing provision, for example allowing utilisation of retained Right to Buy receipts and funding initiatives such as the Care and Support Specialised Housing Fund, however this potential increase in provision is being counter balanced by a decrease in the revenue funding available to support older people to retain their accommodation, this type of support is known as housing related support.

Housing related support services are provided through the Supporting People programme to vulnerable people to enable them to live independently and to prevent homelessness. The programme which has run throughout the life of the 2008-12 strategy has been administered by the local authority and provides support to a wide range of client groups including older people with support needs, frail elderly, people with mental health problems and homeless people. Currently, housing related support is provided to older people in the following ways:

Housing-Related Floating Support for people over the age of 55:

- Practical help and support to optimise levels of independence and reduce social isolation and loneliness.
- Delivered in the service user's own home, whether they privately rent, rent from the Council or Housing Association or are owner occupiers.
- Support is tailored to meet individual needs and can include help to set up and maintain a home, benefits and budgeting advice, support to access health services, support to access activities to reduce isolation and support to ensure the home is safe and secure.
- Links closely with other local health economy and social care services to facilitate timely discharge from hospital to contribute to the flow and capacity through the Urgent Care System and prevent unplanned acute admission and re-admission to hospital.

Housing related support in Retirement Villages with Care Services (Extra care):

- Flexible and responsive housing related support to optimise levels of independence and reduce social isolation and loneliness.
- Delivered in 5 existing Retirement Villages with Care Services (Extra care).
- Support is tailored to meet individual needs and can include help to set up and maintain a home, benefits and budgeting advice, support to access health services, support to access activities to reduce isolation and support to ensure the home is safe and secure.

Reductions in Housing Related Support Spend

Over the last three years, the council has been required to make significant financial savings; these revenue spending cuts have already impacted on the types and levels of housing related support services commissioned by the council. Savings of £20m need to be made during 2014/15 which will continue to impact on services across the council and further revenue spending cuts are expected in the following years. It is important to note however, that in terms of the delivery of the Older People's Housing Strategy; continued reductions in the housing related support services available for older people, translate into a serious risk to the delivery of the new supported housing provision required to meet the identified gap in supply.

Despite a back drop of reduced funding, there have, however, been improvements to some of the key support services available to help people prolong their independence; for example there has been a significant reduction in the waiting times for the completion of smaller adaptations and the delivery of larger disability aids through the council's Disability Resource Service, 97% of people using this service have equipment delivered/installed within 7 days. The council also opened an Independent Living Centre incorporating an assessment service and a 'try before you buy' service for people requiring specialist or smaller items of equipment designed to help them manage at home. Other key housing related support services include:

Home Improvement Agency:

The Agency provides a range of services for people over the age of 55 (whether they rent from the Council, Housing Association, private sector or are owner occupiers) services include:

- Housing related support, information and advice.

- Advice and support to identify repairs, maintenance and improvements to their property and provide options available to adapt and repair; including advice on timescales and cost.
- Handyperson service.
- Falls and Accident Prevention.
- Gardening Help.
- Target Hardening, for example fitting of locks and bolts.
- Navigator scheme - links service users with volunteers to reduce isolation and support access into social care and health services.

Community Alarms/Assistive Technology

This includes a range of assistive technologies to support service users with a range of needs. At the lowest level 'telecare', which consists of a monitoring device linked to a dispersed alarm unit, can help to summon support from nearby staff or via a control monitoring service. They provide a 24 hour a day response service to support older people in the event of an emergency or if an issue arises in the home.

5.0 Older People's Housing - Key Challenges for the council

Preventative Services - Strategic priorities at both national and local level continue to emphasise the provision of preventative services which are customer focussed and which enable individuals to remain independent for longer. In order to pursue this service model and reflecting the aspirations of older people, the strategic direction of health and social care has been to move away from the direct provision of care towards reablement service models, provided wherever possible, in a resident's own home. Continuing pressure on health and social care budgets has created a significant challenge for the authority in terms of its ability to continue resourcing these types of preventative services which can create longer term savings. Developing or remodelling support services may therefore require some realignment of existing resources to deliver health benefits and independence for customers as well as delivering savings on over-stretched budgets.

Staying put or Moving On - A balanced approach is required around resourcing services and adaptations to support people to stay in their existing home whilst also encouraging and supporting older social housing residents who may be under-occupying larger family homes to downsize to age specific housing (in some cases prior to them needing support services). Further research will also be necessary to understand the potential savings to health and social care budgets of assisting the relatively large number of older people living in unsuitable accommodation in the private sector to move to more appropriate accommodation thus postponing the limiting effects of debilitating health conditions and the need for formal care services.

Determining Future Investment Decisions - In terms of improving existing accommodation, following earlier sustainability assessments; work has taken place to provide indicative costs for remodelling and modernising the council's seven sheltered housing schemes to bring them up to current design and space standards over a 10 year period. Following a successful bid to the Homes and Communities Agency in 2013, the council was awarded funding towards remodelling and modernising one of its sheltered housing schemes in the north of the city and work started in this respect in March 2014 with completion due in 2015. Over the next few years however, the council will need to

make individual investment decisions in relation to the other six schemes taking account of the increasing supply of retirement/ extra care accommodation and local demand issues.

In addition to its sheltered housing accommodation, the council currently owns and manages 3583 bungalows across the city representing 19% of its stock, previous sustainability assessments suggest that this older accommodation is unlikely to be fit for purpose in the long term. The main issues with this stock relate to size and design; bungalows are typically very small with inadequate turning space for wheelchairs and layouts which make it difficult to install adaptations, further to this, a significant number of bungalows are inappropriately situated and/or have a number of steps leading up to the property entrance. Over the next 12 months the council will start to develop a framework for appraising its existing bungalow stock on a phased basis, the timescale and methodology for undertaking this work is currently being scoped out and will be included in the associated action plan.

Improving Housing Conditions in the Private Sector - A private sector stock condition survey undertaken in 2008, found that the worst housing conditions in the city were to be found in the private sector. In 2008, 91 per cent of older private sector households owned their own property and overall 47 per cent lived in properties which failed to meet the Decent Homes Standard. In addition, high proportions of older people living in poor housing conditions in the private sector are economically vulnerable and experience fuel poverty. Since 2008, there has been some targeted investment to address non-decency issues through selected clearance activity, the Kick Start Loans programme, adaptations and energy efficiency measures, however inadequate housing conditions continue to be a concern for older people particularly those with poor health, physical disabilities and learning difficulties and resources will continue to be made available to address these issues.

6.0 On-going Investment Priorities

Significant investment decisions were made to support the delivery of the 2008 strategy, some of which will continue through the life of the 2014-19 Older People’s Housing Strategy. Some limited additional investment is likely to be made by local Registered Providers through the Affordable Development Programme (ADP) 2015-19 and through the utilisation of Right to Buy Receipts to meet specific needs through appropriate acquisitions. Opportunities to access external funding may also arise through future government housing development initiatives. Significant budgetary pressures make it difficult to predict long term spending ambitions; this strategy is therefore focused on short to medium term priorities and these are outlined below:

6.1 New Housing Provision Planned 2014-2019

Development Partner	Funding Stream	Scheme	Number of Units	Estimated Completion
		Retirement Villages		
Sapphire Extra Care Ltd	Private Finance Initiative	Consett Road, Blurton	75	Winter 2015/16
	Private Finance Initiative	Holdcroft Fields, Castle Grove, Abbey Hulton	175	Spring 2016

	Private Finance Initiative	Turnhurst Road, Chell	140	Summer 2016
Sanctuary Housing	Sanctuary and Homes & Community Agency Funding	Slater Street, Middleport	80	March 2015
Bungalows				
Stoke-on-Trent City Council	Care and Specialised Supported Housing Fund	Community Drive, Smallthorne, two bedroom bungalows.	3	March 2015
Proposed Development (Utilisation of Right to Buy Receipts)				
Staffordshire Housing Association	Staffordshire Housing Association and Stoke-on-Trent City Council	1 and 2 bedroom bungalows, Fegg Hayes	9	June 2015

6.2 Investment in Existing Accommodation

- A phased programme of investment to remodel and modernise the council's sheltered housing accommodation commenced in March 2014 at Wooldridge Court, Smallthorne. Individual investment decisions are required for a further six schemes going forward.
- Bungalow sustainability appraisal to commence based on a number of factors including demand, architectural type and location.
- Programme of cross tenure energy efficiency measures to continue.
- On-going investment in major adaptations through the Disabled Facilities Grant and Aids and Adaptations funding.

6.3 On-going Support Services

- The provision of housing related support services to extra care schemes provided by the Extra Care Charitable Trust and Staffordshire Housing Association.
- Housing related floating support and Handyman Service specifically for the over 55 age group to facilitate hospital discharge and the prevention of readmissions.

6.4 Advice and information

- The provision of specific marketing information relating to the new extra care schemes including provision for events and presentations.
- Development of an affordability assessment tool to compare current household expenditure to the cost of living in extra care housing.
- Raise awareness of the range of housing and support options available with staff providing housing advice in the public and voluntary sectors.

7.0 National Strategic Context

Whilst the Older People's Housing Strategy 2014-19 reflects the local findings of the Supply and Demand Mapping Research 2012, it also sits within the national context of:

- An ageing population which is generating significant challenges for a range of policy areas such as health and social care and pension provision, as well as for housing.
- Significant cuts in public investment which has resulted in a reduced reliance on public services to fund services.
- A reduction in housing investment, in particular in housing renewal programmes.
- A growing acceptance that there is a major problem in how we will support growing numbers of older people in the future.
- The identification of a group of older, vulnerable, home owners who have not previously been taken account of in terms of national policy development or identification of appropriate forms of housing.

The national picture represents a growing need for care and support for an ageing population and with it an increasing care bill both nationally and locally. A key aim of the Older People's Housing Strategy is therefore to raise awareness among health and social care professionals to understand the preventative nature of providing appropriate housing and housing related support options. This includes support services outside of extra care and residential accommodation which can assist older people to stay healthy and independent for longer thus reducing pressure on overstretched health and social care budgets.

Since 2008 there have been a number of key strategic documents at a national level which provide further direction in respect of older people's housing and which have informed the Older People's Housing Strategy. The following documents have had particular influence in developing the strategy and its key priorities. (Electronic links to these can be found at Appendix A).

- **Living Well at Home Enquiry (All Party Parliamentary Group on Housing and Care for Older People - 2011).** The report highlights the importance of the home and how unsuitable housing is often the reason why an older person must go into residential care or must stay in hospital.
- **Lifetime Homes, Lifetime Neighbourhoods 2008.** The design and standard of homes developed over recent years has been strongly influenced by the 'Lifetime Homes, Lifetime Neighbourhoods' document published by the Government in 2008 as the 'national strategy for housing in an ageing society.' The strategy set out the vision to build 3 million more homes by 2020 and deliver sustainable communities that would future proof society. More recently, the Homes and Communities Agency has prioritised affordable housing schemes which incorporate the HAPPI² design principles which focus on innovative design of housing and neighbourhoods, accessibility, space and light as well as location.

² Housing our Ageing Population Plan for Implementation

- **The Welfare Reform Act 2012** introduced major changes to the benefits system from April 2013; it represents significant challenges for housing providers over the coming years. Reform changes are targeted primarily at people of working age (those under 61 years of age). In general terms this will replace many existing benefits with a single capped 'Universal Credit' which will include Housing Benefit. The reforms will also introduce size criteria, reducing Housing Benefit by a set amount for each under-occupied bedroom. The impact of the Act on older people and housing providers locally is discussed in more detail in section 8.0 of the strategy.
- **The Health and Social Care Act, 2014**, following on from the 2008 Act, this brings together existing care and support legislation into a new, modern set of laws and builds the system around people's wellbeing, needs and goals. It sets out new rights for Carers, emphasises the need to prevent and reduce care and support needs, and introduces a national eligibility threshold for care and support. Specialist housing for older and disabled people is identified as central to achieving this objective, to support this approach the government has made available £200m of funding for the delivery of supported housing.
- **Better Care Fund** (formerly Integration Transformation Fund) was announced by the Government in the June 2013 spending round, to ensure a transformation in integrated health and social care. The £3.8 billion fund offers no additional resources but is a single pooled budget to support health and social care services to work more closely together in local areas; its purpose is to improve social care services by shifting resources from acute services into community and preventative settings.

Other documents informing the strategy:

- **Laying the Foundations: A Housing Strategy for England (2011)**
- **Localism Act 2011**
- **Breaking the Mould: Re-visioning older people's housing the National Housing Federation's 2011 report**
- **On the Pulse: Housing Routes to Better Health Outcomes for Older People**

8.0 Local Strategic Context

The Council's **Mandate for Change** sets out the vision for Stoke-on-Trent to be a great working city and represents the overarching strategic objectives for each council directorate to work towards. The four aims focus on attracting new business, job creation, enabling independence and supporting regeneration in order to create a city that people want to live in, figure 1 illustrates:

Make Stoke-on-Trent a Great Working City			
Strategic Aims			
Make Stoke-on-Trent the Place to	Support and Develop Existing	Make Stoke-on-Trent a Great	Promote Independence and

Bring Business	Business	Place to Live in	Healthy Lives
Develop an Effective and Confident Council			

Figure 1

The council's overarching programme of investment is clearly targeted and focused on the delivery of the council's Mandate for Change, the purpose of which is to make Stoke-on-Trent a great working city, underpinned by an effective and confident council.

The Older People's Housing Strategy is aligned to the **Mandate for Change**; it focuses in particular on the key strategic aims to:

- Make Stoke-on-Trent a Great Place to Live in and
- Promoting Independence and Healthy Lives.

The following table highlights the alignment of the Older People's Housing Strategy with the strategic aims of the Mandate for Change.

Mandate for Change	
Strategic Aim: Making Stoke-on-Trent a Great Place to Live in	
Older People's Housing Strategy 2014-19	
Outcomes	Measure
Effective use of existing housing	<p>Allocations policies support the needs of older people who want to remain independent.</p> <p>Flexible matching criteria for older people on the housing waiting list.</p> <p>Effective use of adapted properties by matching them to households with appropriate needs.</p>

<p>Improved quality of existing stock</p>	<p>Phased investment programme to remodel and modernise the council's sheltered stock.</p> <p>Appraisal of bungalow stock and delivery of sustainability plans.</p> <p>Increased take up of the loans available to assist people in the private sector to undertake repairs.</p> <p>Delivery of major adaptations to homes through Disabled Facilities Grants and Aids and Adaptations funding.</p>
<p>Strategic Aim: Promoting Independence and Healthy Lives</p>	
<p>Outcomes</p>	<p>Measure</p>
<p>Appropriate range of specialist and supported housing</p>	<p>Increased supply of affordable housing options suitable for older people for rent or buy in areas of least supply.</p> <p>Deliver four new extra care housing schemes by 2016.</p>
<p>More people living in appropriately adapted homes</p>	<p>Implementation of the Aids and Adaptations Policy 2014 enabling older council tenants to move to accommodation better suited to their needs.</p>
<p>More energy efficient, warmer homes</p>	<p>Reduced winter related deaths due to cold where properties have received energy saving measures.</p> <p>Reduced heating bills.</p>
<p>Transformed housing advice and support services, which ensure early intervention and prevention</p>	<p>Improved marketing of extra care housing provision.</p> <p>Raised awareness of supported housing options within the housing, social care, health and voluntary sectors.</p>

Housing Revenue Account (HRA) 30 Year Business Plan

The Housing Revenue Account Business Plan is aligned to the key themes of the Mandate for change and city's strategic housing priorities, as outlined above; a

key focus of the HRA 30 year Business Plan investment programme is the promotion of independence and healthy lives through the provision of appropriate housing and housing related support.

In relation to older peoples housing, HRA investment priorities include measures to promote the sustainability of existing housing for older people. Key investment priorities therefore include the council's seven sheltered housing schemes and its bungalow accommodation which currently accounts for around 19% of its total stock. Decisions around investment programmes for both types of accommodation will however, need to take place against a backdrop of increasing supplies of new retirement/extra care accommodation to be delivered over the next four years and the potential effect this will have on demand for other types of older people's accommodation.

The impact of the Welfare Reform Act 2012 on rental income is still emerging and, what the full effect will be on the investment opportunities funded by the Housing Revenue Account in future years is currently unclear. Changes brought in by the Act, specifically affecting older people's housing benefit entitlement and therefore HRA income are as follows:

- The Benefit cap and size criterion ('bedroom tax') does not apply to older claimants although in the future it could be extended beyond the current criteria. Households with an occupant ineligible for pension credit will be affected by both the size criterion and the capped Universal Credit; this will have an impact on couples where one is not of pensionable age and is likely to be a particular issue among people who have retired early due to ill health or those who are unable to work due to full time caring commitments, or indeed those people planning for older age in their housing choice. The council does however, have some discretion with regard to providing housing payments in these situations.
- A new benefit called Personal Independence Payment (PIP) will replace Disability Allowance (DLA) for eligible working age people aged 16-64. PIP will be extended to people over 65 from 2016 and this will be accompanied by more rigorous and regular assessments which could result in the loss of Housing Benefit payments.
- The Welfare Reform Act debated the possibility of introducing a capital limit for Pension Credit – there isn't one at the moment. This would take pensioners with high levels of savings (probably over £16,000) out of benefit.

Taking into account the significant changes to the benefit system, efforts to increase take up of benefits in older age groups will become increasingly important. It is widely acknowledged that as a group, older people significantly under-claim the amount of benefits that they are entitled to, therefore maintaining levels of advice and support will be key to ensuring that this does not get worse as the new framework for claiming and receiving benefits is introduced.

Working Differently - Co-Operative Working Model

In view of the on-going challenges around local conditions, rising demand for services, significantly reduced resources and the need to empower communities;

the council has started a process of transformational change in the way services are delivered and this is reflected in the Co-operative Working Model adopted in the North of the city.

The platform underpinning new service models going forward will be based on three key principles:

- Managing demand for services by re-directing and referring people to appropriate agencies as well as encouraging and empowering them to take responsibility and be more self-reliant by, for example, undertaking small maintenance jobs on their homes.
- Changing the way we deliver services by reducing silo-working and taking a holistic multi-agency approach to assisting families with multiple needs. Services and support will be delivered close to where people live utilising a range of support mechanisms including statutory services, partner agencies with specialist support services brought in as appropriate.
- Working together with communities to deliver services together, working with partners to achieve the best value for money and supporting people to work differently. This might include for example, partner agencies working more closely with statutory bodies for example, sharing office space and equipment.

In terms of helping to meet the support needs of older people; the co-operative working model will focus on some key outcomes including, early intervention/prevention, local solutions and approaches and joined up and integrated commissioning designed to keep older people safe and healthy at home.

World Health Organisation - Age Friendly City Initiative

In 2007 the World Health Organisation (WHO) published guidance which identified eight domains to be addressed in order to develop an 'Age Friendly City'. The key principles behind the Age Friendly City concept is to create places which enable everyone to age in a setting which allows people to remain active and independent. Developing lifetime housing is a core part of this concept, with social participation and generational integration identified as key priorities to help address social isolation. Stoke-on-Trent City Council has been accepted as part of the Global Age Friendly Cities Network which represents the city's commitment to the following:

- Establishment of mechanisms to involve older people throughout the Age-Friendly Cities and Communities cycle.
- Development of a baseline assessment of the age-friendliness of the city.
- Development of a 3-year city-wide action plan based on the findings of the assessment.
- Identification of indicators to monitor progress against this plan.

The implementation of this Older People's Housing Strategy will be integral to the city's recognition as an active member of the Global Age Friendly Cities Network and in supporting the delivery of the city's 3 year action plan.

Joint Strategic Needs Assessment 2011 – 2016 (JSNA)

Local Authorities and Health Authorities have a duty to produce a JSNA, the purpose of which is to assess current and future health needs to inform strategic decision making and commissioning. Locally the main finding of the JSNA report is that people living in Stoke-on-Trent have significantly poorer health, and lower levels of wellbeing than many other areas of the country, with high levels of deprivation in the city being a major contributory factor.

The issues affecting older people are many, varied and often complex. The Index of Multiple Deprivation identifies Stoke-on-Trent as the 16th most deprived local authority area in Britain and poorer residents are disproportionately affected by poor health and disability. Within this index and most relevant to older people is the Health and Disability index and this places the city 19th out of 326 as the most deprived local authority in terms of health conditions. The cumulative effect of poverty and ill health in a time of reduced public spending clearly increases the challenge for the city to provide innovative and cost-effective services targeted at those most in need.

Stoke-on-Trent Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2012 – 2015 (JHWBS) -

The Health and Social Care Act 2012 introduced the requirement for local authorities, in partnership with health authorities, to set up Health and Wellbeing Boards with a statutory duty to produce a Joint Strategic Needs Assessment and a Health and Wellbeing Strategy informed by the JSNA. The priorities of the Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy place a greater emphasis on preventative services and coordination between local authorities, health trusts, local businesses, service providers and the voluntary sector, two of its key strategic outcomes have also informed this strategy, these are:

- **Living well:** Everyone lives in a good quality home, in an area which they like and in an environment in which they feel safe across all generations.
- **Ageing well:** Everyone has a positive experience of ageing in the city and people are supported to live independent, inclusive and fulfilling lives throughout the life course.

The four priorities of the Older People's Housing Strategy directly support both of these strategic outcomes. The provision of a broad range of housing options and the availability of associated support services is a key element of maintaining independence for older people. In particular, housing related support services aim to support people to remain at home in practical ways, for example by the provision of home improvement agency services but also by catering for some of their social and emotional needs. It is understood that social exclusion has a negative impact on mental health and can lead to depression and associated health problems which can lead to an older person being unable to manage at home. Studies suggest that this is an increasing problem for older adults, particularly those who have lost a loved one. The importance of taking a holistic approach to ageing is already recognised as a key element of housing related support services. This approach is being strengthened by the development of an integrated commissioning unit within the council which has a key focus on commissioning services across a range of services designed to ensure that older

people are supported to live as independently as possible at home and in other settings.

Supply and Demand Mapping Research 2012

The Supply and Demand Mapping Research 2012 builds upon earlier research undertaken in 2007 and includes a detailed assessment of supply and demand for housing in Stoke-on-Trent at both a city-wide and local level. The research takes into account the impact of known future developments and provides an analysis of the additional units required to meet both current and future demand. Informed by the council's review of older people's housing related support services undertaken in 2012, it also provides the evidential base for the four key priorities outlined in the following section of the strategy.

The research defined 60 years as the age at which someone becomes 'older' as this was the starting point used in the 2007 study. Clearly, age is not the defining factor in assessing the housing support needs of older people as each individual will have different life experiences, values, expectations and needs; however this is the age by which older people may start to develop health and mobility issues or begin to think about their future housing needs. Whilst 60+ has been used for research purposes, it should be noted that there are some age specific schemes across the city which are allocated to adults aged 55 and over.

The full report and an executive summary of the Demand and Supply Mapping Research 2012 can be accessed at the link listed in Appendix A at the end of this document.

9.0 Strategic Priorities

The following strategic priorities are based on the findings of the Supply and Demand Mapping Research 2012 and a detailed consultation exercise undertaken with local older people, strategic partners and other stakeholders in 2013.

9.1 Deliver a choice of new, appropriate, high quality, affordable housing options enabling older people to live as independently as possible.

Ambition: Recognise the growing importance of appropriate supported housing for maintaining health and independence for older people and its contribution to reduced health and social care spending. The ambition for the city is to continue to increase the supply of affordable new housing which meets the design standards appropriate for people in later life and which offers flexible support services.

Evidence Statement

Data from the 2011 census identifies a current population of 38,800 people aged 65 and over, representing 15.6% of the city's population. Whilst the overall population of the city has grown since 2001, data from the 2011 census evidences a marginal decrease among those aged 65 and over in comparison with figures from the 2001 census. Further analysis reveals that whilst the number of people aged 70–79 has decreased there has been an increase in the number of people

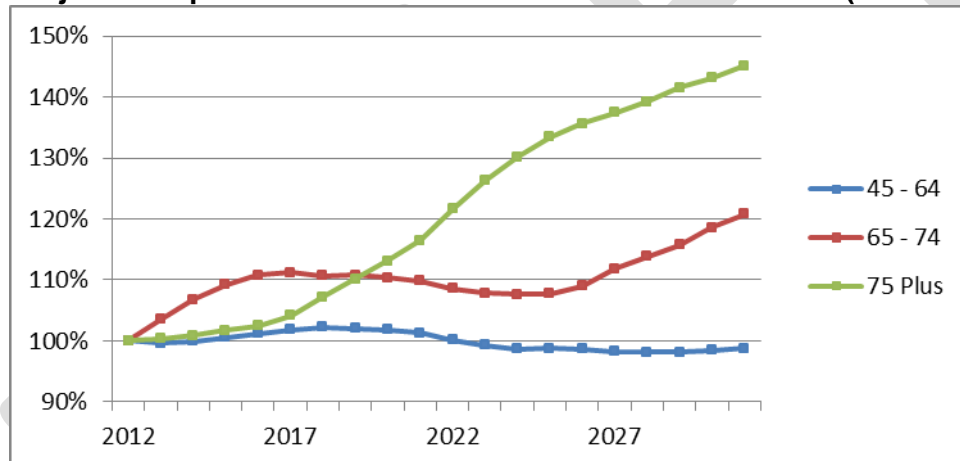
aged over 80 years. This suggests that in the interim years between the 2001 and 2011 census there has been some outward migration among those aged 60–69, towards the more rural areas surrounding the city which in turn have seen an increase in their population among this age group.

Further research is required to determine the reason for this outward migration; it is possible that the following could be determining factors in this decision:

- More affluent households are leaving the city as they reach retirement age to move to more desirable rural areas.
- There is a lack of housing suitable for older people in both the private and public sector within the city.

The likely result of this outward migration is an increasing number of people aged 80 and over remaining in the city that are likely to be economically vulnerable and experiencing increasing health problems, thus increasing the demand for supported housing options and social care services within the city.

Projected Population Growth in Stoke-on-Trent 2012 – 2031 (Percentage)

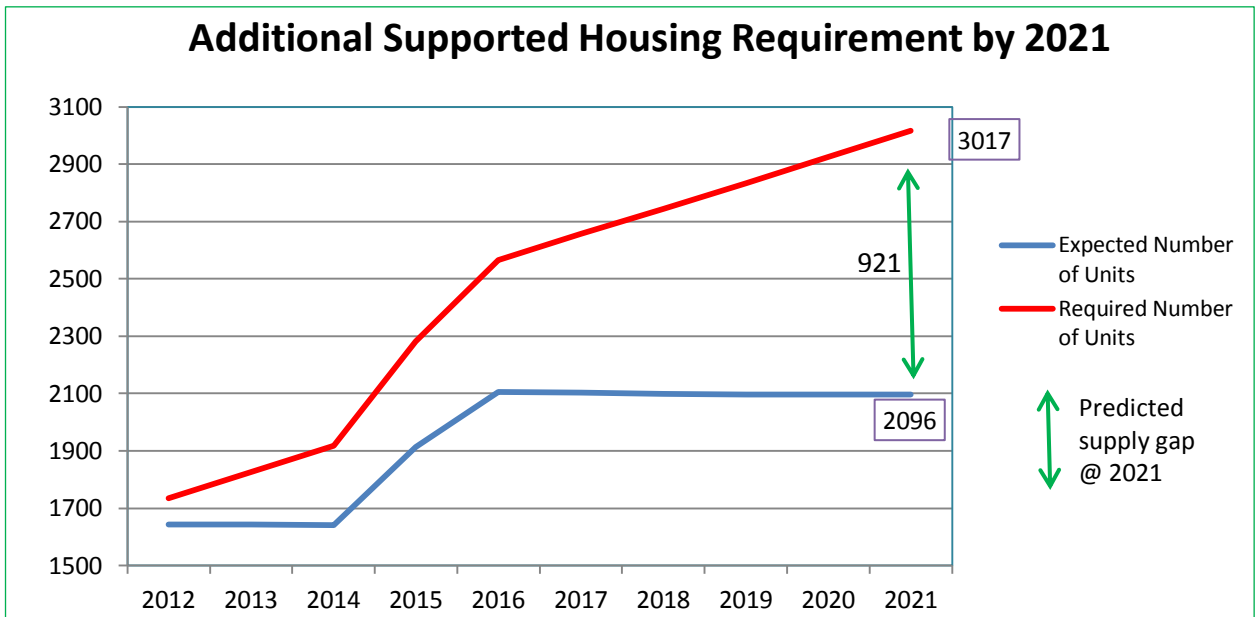


Draft Strategic Housing Market Forecast 2012

Additional Housing Requirements

Based on current population figures, there continues to be a deficit of supported housing accommodation within the city – currently the number of supported housing units meets the need of 3% of the population of over 60s. The nationally recognised level of supported housing required for the population over the age of 60 is 5%. This figure is calculated by subtracting the total of existing accommodation units and known future provision by the overall level of need.

Using the 5% baseline figure and taking into account the delivery of 217 units of supported accommodation and 104 bungalows over the last 5 years, the Supply and Demand Mapping Research 2012 highlights the continuing undersupply of supported housing within the city. Allowing for the 470 units of supported housing provision currently in development, the total shortfall of age specific housing units required by 2021 is 921; this figure is broken down as follows:



(Figures based on supply and demand mapping information @ January 2013)

Additional Supported Housing Requirement by 2021 by Type

Type of Accommodation	Level of Support	No of Units
Category 1	Bungalows or flats. Low level support, usually a hard wired or dispersed alarm system.	192
Category 2	Sheltered Housing typically 30 to 40 flats with higher levels of housing related support, helping to maintain the person within the community.	193
Extra Care	Flexible levels of support from very low to high. Usually includes a range of on- site facilities.	536

In addition, to the requirement for increased supported housing provision; the 2012 research recommends that the development of bungalows remains a strategic housing priority for the City Council. Bungalows remain the most popular choice of housing for older households and further investment in this type of accessible accommodation in line with the growing population of older people, would provide a more equal spread of bungalow accommodation across the city.

Demand for Supported Housing

Analysis of the council's housing register shows that there are 1135 households aged 60+ on the waiting list; approximately 50% of these are, under the current allocations policy considered to require rehousing. The applicant's address provides a good indication of demand for social housing at a local level. Comparison with the supply of supported housing in each electoral ward identifies a number of areas where demand is significantly higher than the supply, or where there is some demand and no supply. Where possible, funding opportunities for

future development of older peoples' accommodation will be directed towards those areas where there is an increased disparity between supply and demand.

These areas include:

- Baddeley
- Milton & Norton
- Birches Head & Central Forest Park
- Broadway & Longton East
- Goldenhill & Sandyford
- Lightwood North & Normacot
- Little Chell & Stanfield

There is also demand for housing in the Meir Hay and Hanford & Trentham wards, where there is lower demand but very little supply of supported housing. Analysis of unpaid care provision shows there is a high prevalence within these areas, which suggests that such households and their carers may benefit from the availability of supported housing. Similarly, as house prices are higher within these wards; there may be a market for schemes with low cost home ownership options.

Specific Needs

The Index of Multiple Deprivation identifies Stoke-on-Trent as being the 16th most deprived local authority area in Britain (1 being the worst) 31.2% of the population are classified as living within the 10% most deprived areas in England and 1 in 6 of the population live in areas which fall within the worst 5%. Analysis of data from a range of sources including the Index of Multiple Deprivation and the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment also identifies high levels of health deprivation within the city, specifically in relation to the number of individuals claiming Personal Independence Payment (formerly Disability Living Allowance) and people with a long term limiting illness (LTLI).

Projections from the 2001 census indicated that by 2012, 23,118 residents aged over 65 would have a long term limiting illness; however the 2011 Census identified Stoke-on-Trent as having more than double this number with 57,522 residents having a long term limiting illness, representing 23.8% of the population. This is significantly higher than the national average at 17.9% and the regional average at 18.8%. Furthermore, incidences of dementia and learning disabilities in the older age groups are significant and projected to increase over future years. Combined with low incomes, it is expected that this will drive the need for more supported accommodation, with appropriate models of support, to enable people to maintain their independence for as long as possible.

Culturally Sensitive Accommodation

The most recent figures in relation to ethnicity identify a minority ethnic population of 8.9% (21,200) across Stoke-on-Trent. Among households of pensionable age; the minority ethnic population reduces to 2%, with Asian residents accounting for the largest minority ethnic group 1.1% (500 residents) and Black residents accounting for 0.4% (200 residents).

The most ethnically diverse areas of the city are; Shelton, Cobridge, Normacot and Tunstall. Among Asian households demand from the council's Housing Register shows that there is a clear preference to live in these areas due to the established communities, location of places of worship and shops selling specialist food and clothing.

Research carried out by the council in 2008, identified a significant demand among older Asian households for a supported housing scheme. Based on this research, a culturally sensitive housing scheme has been developed by a local Registered Provider in Normacot, however despite extensive consultation with the local community and positive feedback, during its development; this did not translate into the anticipated number of lettings to Asian elders.

At first let, around 50% of the units at Alhambra Court were let to Asian households; however subsequent allocations have been to non-Asian households. Although demand for Alhambra Court has been less than expected, in comparison to other sheltered housing schemes, the proportion of Asian tenants is high and this is an extremely positive outcome (in comparison there are no Asian tenants living in the 216 sheltered housing flats owned by the City Council).

The proportion of lets to Asian households show that Alhambra Court has provided an accessible supported housing option for this client group and whilst there perhaps continues to be a preference towards living in the more traditional extended family setting, the scheme provides an option for those who do not have the benefit of family support and therefore meets a clear gap in the market. In respect of developing further accommodation to meet the needs and preferences of this client group, it may be more appropriate to consider the development of larger family homes built to accommodate multi-generational households.

Low Cost Home Ownership

Although older home owners are likely to be asset rich, many are income poor and for those living in properties that are in disrepair, it is likely that additional savings will be required to facilitate a move to more suitable accommodation, however tighter lending restrictions for older households mean that options are limited. An increase in low cost home ownership options, within the city would increase choice among this group, providing a solution for households who do not want the burden of repairs and maintenance of a property but wish to retain some equity. To test the market in this respect, particularly in areas with higher property values and limited housing options for older people, it will be necessary to undertake further research.

Going Forward

The Older People's Housing Strategy 2008-12 has delivered a significant improvement in the number of supported housing units (270) since 2007 with another 470 of supported housing due to become available by 2016; however the Supply and Demand Mapping Research identifies a continuing undersupply of supported housing accommodation. In line with the projected growth in the over 60 population, the number of units required is estimated to be 3,017 by 2021; to achieve this, in addition to those schemes already under development, 920 units of accommodation would need to be delivered over the next 7 years (536 of these

being extra care units). Whilst the research identifies an undersupply of retirement/extra care accommodation, it may be prudent, following the completion of the PFI Round 5 extra care schemes in the next two years, to review the success of such schemes in terms of their popularity with older people and the cost benefits to social care and health budgets. Where investment in age specific housing is proposed, careful consideration will be given to meeting appropriate size and design standards, suitability of location and proximity to shops, transport and general amenities.

In terms of funding new accommodation, the next 5 years present a key challenge for the authority and local Registered Providers; the grant rates available through the Homes and Community Agency's Affordable Housing Development Programme (AHDP) have reduced significantly since 2007 and as a result, Registered Provider development is likely to be reduced over the next 5 years. Currently only one scheme included in the ADHP 2015-19 bidding round has provision for older persons' accommodation and this amounts to 9 bungalows, in order to speed up delivery of the scheme, it is likely that these units will be delivered by Staffordshire Housing Association utilising local authority Right to Buy receipts.

What we need to do
Strategic priority 9.1
Deliver a choice of new, appropriate, high quality, affordable housing options enabling older people to live as independently as possible.
Investigate the reasons for outward migration in the 70-79 age groups.
Reduce undersupply of supported housing by 2019, where possible focusing investment in areas of high demand and least supply.
Improve our understanding of the housing options and services required for people with dementia and learning disabilities.
Improve take-up of benefits by older people.
Re-examine the housing and support preferences of elders from different Asian communities.
Test the market in areas of higher property values in relation to shared-ownership options.
Review the effect of increased supplies of retirement/extra care accommodation on demand for other forms of older people's housing.

Strategic priority

9.2 Improve existing accommodation choices and neighbourhoods, providing prosperous communities where older people feel in control, safe and secure.

Ambition: Recognising that the quality of people's housing and the importance of feeling safe and secure in their neighbourhoods plays a major part in promoting health and well-being; the ambition for the city is to improve the quality of existing housing in particular to reduce levels of disrepair and improve energy efficiency in the private sector for vulnerable households. More specifically, resources will be targeted at remodelling and improving the council's sheltered housing stock, undertaking a sustainability assessment of the council's bungalow stock, making effective use of resources available for aids and adaptations in the private and public sector and continuing investment in energy efficiency measures.

Evidence Base

It is widely acknowledged that the standard of accommodation is a key factor in maintaining the health and wellbeing of older people. Those households living in cold, damp conditions are more susceptible to poor health and suffer more from long term health conditions and mental health problems. The majority of older households in Stoke-on-Trent live in the private sector and research has shown that there is a clear disparity in the house conditions between this sector and the social rented sector, with private sector households living in some of the worst housing conditions in the city.

Private Sector Housing - In 2008, Stoke-on-Trent City Council commissioned a full private sector stock condition survey to understand the overall condition of residential dwellings within the owner occupied, private rented and registered provider tenures. Overall, the survey identified that 91 per cent of older private sector households owned their own property and over 47 per cent (13,588 households) lived in properties which failed to meet the decent homes standard – of which 6,663 properties had a category 1 hazard present and therefore failed the Housing Health and Safety Rating System, placing the occupant at significant risk of harm.

Since 2008, there has been some targeted investment to address non-decency issues including clearance activity, the Kick Start Loans programme and the retrofit energy efficiency initiative and, as a result, it is likely that the level stock condition has improved. It remains the case however, that some of the worst housing conditions are still to be found in the private rented sector, especially terraced housing, where older vulnerable people with poor health, physical disabilities and learning difficulties are particularly at risk because of inadequate housing. Whilst up to date information is unavailable, there continues to be a contrast between levels of non-decency in the private and social housing sectors where council owned housing met the Decent Homes Standard in 2010.

The city council has a legal obligation to tackle fuel poverty under the Home Energy Conservation Act. In Stoke-on-Trent an estimated 18% of households live in fuel poverty. The propensity of fuel poverty is highest in the private sector housing stock where there is a greater concentration of older energy inefficient housing stock. The city's approach to tackling fuel poverty is set out in the city's Green Homes and Affordable Warmth Strategy 2012-2015. The strategy provides the strategic framework for housing related energy efficiency investment and activity and continues to focus on areas of greatest need in particular the private sector.

Whilst all council owned social housing in the city met the Decent Homes Standard which includes thermal efficiency standards by 2010 only around 50% of private sector stock currently does so. Since 2008, investment has been targeted at properties/households in greatest need and £24 million has been spent in the private sector installing 27,150 energy saving measures to 15,100 homes; investment in council housing amounts to £9.2m and resulted in the installation of 6,000 energy saving measures to 2,700 properties.

Home Owners

In terms of home owners, the 2008 survey showed that although to a lesser extent than the private rented sector, a high proportion of older home owners lived in poor housing conditions, were economically vulnerable and were experiencing fuel poverty. The extent of this problem is currently reinforced by analysis of the council's housing register which shows that as at March 2014, home owners account for the highest proportion of applicants aged 60 and over applying for council owned supported housing, more research is required to assess why older homeowners are disproportionately represented on the housing waiting list.

Whilst a minority of older home owners would prefer to move home; the city has a significant number of low income home owners living in poor housing conditions who would prefer to remain in their home but because of health conditions, caring responsibilities and low income are unable to undertake the necessary repairs and/or adaptations that could improve their quality of life considerably. In conjunction with Revival the city's Home Improvement Agency, the council is also offering low cost Home Improvement Loans designed to enable households on a low income to undertake improvements which will bring their home up to Decent Homes Standard. For some of these older households a loan on the value of their home could make such help affordable, however the rules on entitlement to means-tested benefits, and the constraints on the terms of equity release loans, mean that financial drawings against equity have not been a realistic option for older home-owners.

To help address this issue, Foundations, the national coordinating body for the Home Improvement Agency sector, are developing a partnership with an organisation called 'StepChange' so that Home Improvement Agency customers can access equity release and other kinds of loans through an independent organisation. Revival the city's current Home Improvement Agency are one of 4 agencies to pilot this scheme which should be available from September 2014. StepChange is a debt charity offering independent, impartial and confidential debt advice incorporating financial services and are the UK's only charity-operated advice service of this kind. Providing free advice, they help people to access

mortgage, retirement mortgage & equity release information. They have a conservative lending policy with an emphasis on future flexibility, helping people to take on only as much debt as required to make a positive difference to their lives.

Local Authority Sheltered Accommodation

Stoke-on-Trent City Council own and manage seven sheltered housing schemes in various locations across the city, built between 1965 and 1980, these category 2 schemes represent some of the oldest in the city. A detailed option appraisal undertaken in relation to the sustainability of the seven schemes; highlighted the need for significant investment in order to provide accommodation which meets modern design standards.

The study also showed that whilst residents' aspirations showed some dissatisfaction with the accommodation in terms of its size and layout, generally there were high levels of satisfaction with the schemes including their location and with the support they receive; compared with general needs accommodation, sheltered accommodation is most likely to be let at first offer. Individual investment decisions will take place over the next few years which will take account of the increased supply of retirement/extra care accommodation and local demand issues. Registered Housing Providers contacted as part of the Supply and Demand Mapping Research 2012 had already undertaken some modernisation works to their sheltered schemes or were considering widening their allocations criteria to include younger adults.

Over the next four years, the completion of additional retirement/extra care units will significantly shift the profile of the older people's housing schemes within the city in terms of age and quality. An increase in this type of accommodation reflecting the current aspirations of older people may impact on demand for older sheltered housing schemes (particularly those in areas of closest proximity to new developments) and this will need to be monitored as these schemes come on line.

Local Authority Bungalow Stock

The council owns and manages 3583 bungalows within the city, representing around 19 per cent of the council's housing stock. The quality and location of this stock is a key strategic issue for the council; consultation with older people and data from the council's waiting list highlights the fact that bungalows are still the main accommodation preference for older people seeking more suitable accommodation. However, previous sustainability assessments identified that the council's bungalow stock is unlikely to be sustainable or fit for purpose, in the long term. The main issue relates to size and design; bungalows are typically very small with inadequate turning space for wheelchairs and layouts which makes it difficult to install adaptations. In addition, a significant number of bungalows are not where they are need and/or have a number of steps leading up to the property entrance. In comparison local Registered Providers manage around 104 bungalows, the majority of which have been built since 2008 and are therefore more likely to meet modern design standards.

Going Forward

Following the Housing Revenue Account Reform the council now has greater flexibility to invest in its housing stock and the council is currently developing a framework for appraising its bungalow stock which will include a number of options including, remodelling, change-of-use, potential disposal and alternative allocations criteria. As is the case with older sheltered housing accommodation, continued investment in new build accommodation with modern design standards suitable for older people may have a detrimental effect on demand for older bungalow accommodation in the coming years and this will need to be kept under review to inform future investment decisions.

The experience of older economically vulnerable people in the private sector emphasises the need to provide adaptations to people's homes where this does not increase dependency. The council will continue to deliver a programme of major adaptations cross tenure and to this effect £1.2 m is included within the council's Medium Term Financial Strategy for private sector provision with a further £834,000 within the Housing Revenue Account Business Plan for adaptations to council housing. Some provision will also be provided by Registered Providers for their tenants. It is anticipated that around 1,200 households will be assisted through aids and adaptations provision over the period to 2016.

In addition to the provision of new installations, work will be undertaken to develop plans to enable better use to be made of adapted social rented properties, for example level access showers, through floor lifts and/or extensions.

In relation to fuel poverty, and acknowledging the positive effect on health and wellbeing of well insulated homes, investment into energy efficient and warmer homes remains a corporate priority forming part of the council's forward programme of works. The residential energy efficiency retrofit programme is largely financed through private sector leverage; it is anticipated that the obligation of fuel companies to achieve carbon savings coming forward through the Government's ECO and Green Deal initiative will deliver a potential programme value of £95 million by 2020. Measures to address fuel poverty and increase the warmth and comfort of homes will be of particular benefit to older residents particularly those with debilitating health conditions.

What we need to do
Strategic priority
9.2 Improve existing accommodation choices and neighbourhoods, providing prosperous communities where older people feel in control, safe and secure.
Improve levels of decency in the private sector using Disabled Facilities Grants and Home Loan initiatives.
Improve awareness of services and the support available to older households to

improve their house conditions.
Continue to focus improvement and adaptation funding towards vulnerable older people.
Make better use of adapted homes in the social rented sector.
Ensure that planned maintenance programmes and modernisation works take account of the accommodation type and the client group in the replacement of components.
Continue to invest in energy efficiency measures designed to reduce fuel poverty particularly in the private sector.
Continue to provide targeted resources under the Warm Homes Healthy People programme to reduce excess winter deaths.
Continue with an investment programme to remodel and modernise the council's sheltered housing stock as appropriate.
Undertake an appraisal of the council's bungalow stock including a review of the allocations criteria.
Investigate feasibility of undertaking age-friendly neighbourhood audits as part of the council's estate-based programmed maintenance assessments.
Sign-post older homeowners who are asset rich but income poor to appropriate equity release/loan schemes for example, the council's Home Improvement Loan scheme.

Strategic priority

9.3 Provide appropriate seamless supportive services to enable people to remain in their own homes whenever possible.

Ambition

Recognise the importance of preventative services in maintaining health and independence and focus on delivering co-ordinated support, advice and assistance for older people in particular those who may have a physical or mental disability, long term limiting illness or complex behavioural condition. Increase the focus on the integration and co-ordination of support and advice services through co-operative working practices and investigate the potential of bringing together a range of funding streams to deliver comprehensive support services.

Evidence Statement

There are a wide range of services in Stoke-on-Trent designed to support older households to remain independent within their own home and to provide services

to assist frail older people in supported accommodation. Assistance can vary from simple safety checks to home adaptations and from low level to intensive care and support. For residents who are unable to pay for their own support, these services are usually provided either directly or are commissioned via statutory services such as Health and the local authority (through Adult Social Care and Housing Services). Services are provided by a range of agencies across the statutory, private and voluntary sectors, many of which work in partnership with each other and meet regularly to review and develop services.

Poor health is a major issue for the city; Stoke-on-Trent has 57,522 residents identified as having a Long Term Limiting Illness (LTLI), representing 24% of the population, this is significantly higher than the national average of 18%. Long Term Limiting Illnesses which include such conditions as Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease, emphysema and diabetes particularly affect older people and are continuing to increase as people live longer, with three out of five people over 60 years being affected. Many older residents within the city have more than one LTLI which places a huge burden on families and carers. Effective management of these conditions is critical as they account for around 70% of all health care spending.

In addition to health care spending, many older people with a long term condition or who are very frail also require home care services (help with washing, bathing and dressing etc.) these services are provided through local authority Adult Social Care budgets and currently costs around £8.25 million annually. In both cases, appropriate housing and flexible care solutions offer older people with long term conditions the opportunity to remain healthier and independent for longer and represent a significant saving to public services reducing pressure on statutory services to provide expensive hospital beds, residential care and home care services.

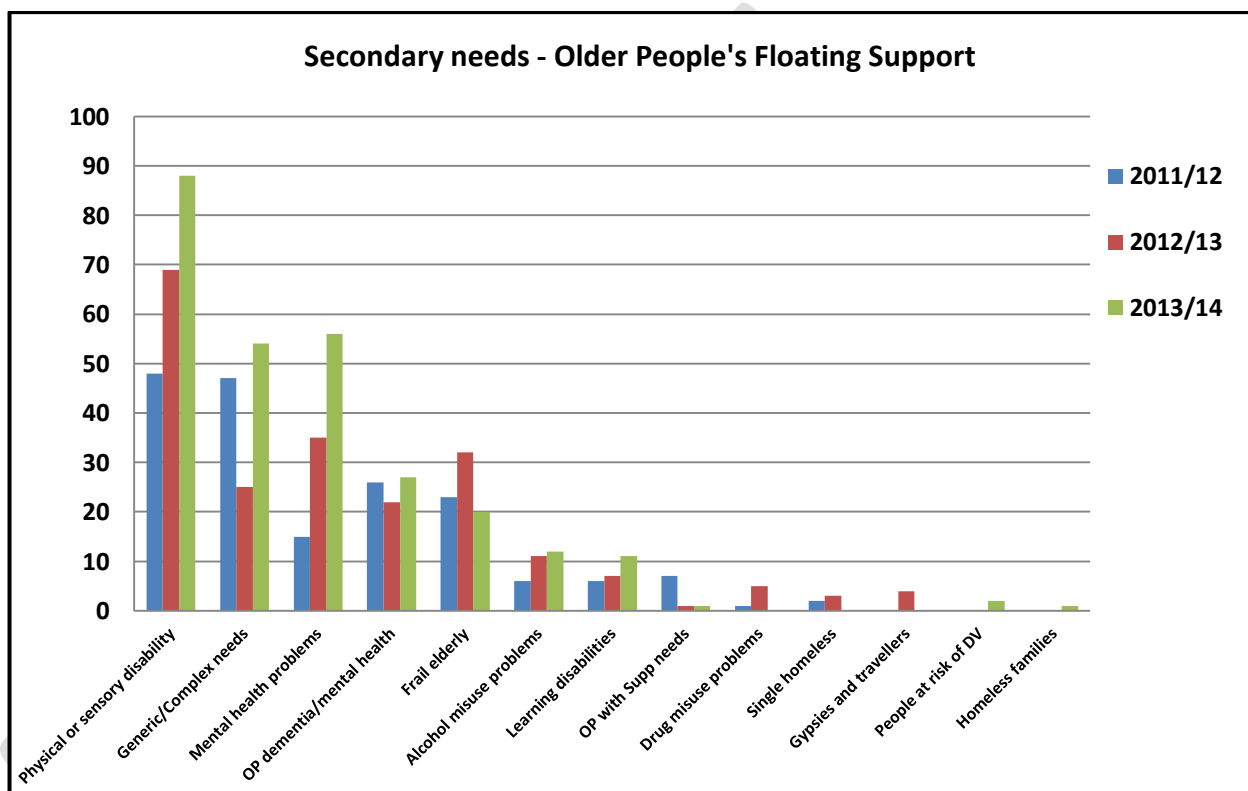
Carers

The effect of tighter restrictions on the provision of home help services will also be felt by unpaid carers, a significant proportion of whom are older people. The 2011 census identifies 14,156 unpaid carers over the age of 50 years with 5,071 of these providing over 50 or more hours of care per week. A comparison of carers with the general population in Stoke-on-Trent found that significantly fewer carers described their health as good (66% against 78% in the general population) with only 54% of those who were caring for someone in the same household and 52% of those caring for more than 20 hours per week describing their health as good. Those aged over 65 are most likely to provide care for someone in the same household and to suffer with their own health problems. The Health Survey for England Adult 2008 reported two thirds of carers reported feeling tired, over half had disturbed sleep and half had feelings of stress and over a third reported feeling depressed. The provision of appropriate supported housing options and community based support services will therefore be of particular benefit to older carers relieving some of the immense strains that they face and preventing carer breakdown. Carer crisis and breakdown can result in costly intervention needed for both the Carer and their Cared for. The costs associated with emergency respite beds typically costs £900 per month.

Housing Related Support

In terms of housing related support, the primary need for the majority of people is in relation to older people with support needs or frail elderly households. The main services provided are around reablement for example, helping the person leaving hospital, arranging aids and adaptations or shopping and cleaning services and dealing with bills and correspondence.

Very often older households receiving housing related support also have one or more other issues which will require some form of intervention. The table below provides a summary of the secondary needs of people accessing the older peoples floating support service.



Supporting People data shows an increase in the number of people needing support in most categories but particularly in relation to; physical or sensory disabilities, generic complex needs, and mental health problems. In terms of secondary support needs, it is worth mentioning mental health problems and alcohol dependency in more depth as these are issues which often require intensive input from housing related support services:

- **Mental Health Issues** – Many studies have clearly demonstrated that loneliness and social isolation can link to mental ill health which may be the case for some older people living alone. There is clear evidence that shows direct links between deprivation and mental ill health. It is estimated that there are about 3,000 people in Stoke-on-Trent who have some level of dementia. Dementia is an age related condition and the number of people with the condition will increase as the population ages. There may be a gap between the level of support available and the level of need in future years

as significant numbers of people do not have the condition diagnosed at an early stage.

➤ **Older People with Alcohol Dependency Issues**

Service providers are reporting that there is an increase in the number of clients with alcohol dependency issues which are often associated with mental health problems. The level of support required from housing providers and service providers to accommodate such customers and the impact of anti-social behaviour as a result of alcohol use, places increased pressure on service providers and can impact the wellbeing of other residents. Research has shown that key triggers for alcohol dependency includes depression, bereavement and social isolation all of which disproportionately affect older people.

Going Forward

In February 2011, the National Housing Federation published a report Breaking the Mould which includes research undertaken with people over 50 (the younger old and those over retirement age) which considered what older people want in the future in relation to housing. Nine areas were highlighted about what older people wanted in a home and included; one that is safe and secure, where there is help at hand, the availability of flexible and personalised support and the ability to socialise and feel included. These basic requirements are reflected in the Age Friendly City criteria and are frequently highlighted by existing users of housing related support services as highly desirable attributes of their homes and communities.

It is clear from the need assessment undertaken by the council that the existing floating support service is well used and demand is evident for this cross-tenure service. Older people's floating support services are integral to meeting the outcome frameworks for health for example linking into the '3 Big Ticket' priorities, including intermediate care and frail/complex care and the strategic priorities of the Health and Wellbeing Strategy.

There is an expectation that floating support will be expanded and used to meet targets around facilitation of hospital discharge and reablement of older people in the community, to reduce and prevent re-admissions, enable people to remain living independently in their own homes and reduce the likelihood of someone having to access residential care prematurely. In addition, closer links to sheltered and extra care housing is proposed to maximise the capacity for housing related support in the city against the reducing levels of financial resource available, it also has a close fit with the co-operative working approach to deliver services close to where people live.

What we need to do
Strategic priority
9.3 Provide appropriate seamless supportive services to enable people to remain in their own homes whenever possible.

Ensure that as the Co-operative Working model is rolled out and formal support services contract, that emphasis is given to the provision of mixed approaches to support for older people, particularly around social isolation by the increasing use of volunteers and existing voluntary and community groups.

Consider utilising sheltered housing to deliver short-term rehabilitation or reablement accommodation for older people after a hospital stay. Any remodelling in this area should be undertaken in-conjunction with health and social care partners to ensure that shared outcomes are achieved and pooled funding resource is utilised to deliver services.

Consider hub and spoke models of housing and support to provide a regular staff presence in sheltered housing schemes and to provide floating support on a tenure neutral basis to those requiring support in the surrounding community and other sheltered schemes across the city.

Ensure that sheltered housing accommodation is used effectively by reviewing the eligibility criteria, and limits, to ensure that the support available matches need and to consider the option to extend the current eligibility criteria to include other vulnerable groups who may be able to live independently, for example people with a learning disability and those under the age of 55 years that may have a physical disability or long-term health condition.

Investigate the funding opportunities for housing support services available through the Better Care Fund.

Strategic priority

9.4 Improve access to information and advice about the housing support options available to older people, through a range of channels and consulting mechanisms.

Ambition

As the older population continues to increase, our aim is to do more to help people make a more informed choice about where and how they live at an earlier age. We want to encourage more people to plan earlier for their housing moves and to have good knowledge of, and access to, housing and support that best suits their needs and aspirations. Improving access to financial information to support housing choices will be an important element in strengthening housing advice for older people considering downsizing as they reach retirement age.

Evidence Base

A key finding of the consultation undertaken as part of the Supply and Demand Mapping Research 2012 was confusion among older people about how to apply for housing in the city, where to obtain housing advice and the inadequacy of the information that is available on which to make an informed choice.

It is clear from research with focus groups that when asked who they would approach to obtain information about housing, older people advised that they would contact the council. Some respondents also felt that from their experience of seeking advice on housing options for older people, that there is no one place to find comprehensive advice about all the age specific housing within the city and how to access it - which makes it difficult for them to make an informed choice. Confusion arises because there are a number of social housing providers operating in the city, several mechanisms for applying for different schemes and different allocations policies among schemes and providers. The council has already produced a comprehensive guide to housing options for older people to address this situation, going forward it will be necessary to ensure that this information is available to the organisations which provide information and advice to older people and to anyone interested in pursuing alternative housing options or wanting to know about services which can help them maintain their independence at home.

Going Forward

The expansion of extra care provision will require more intensive awareness raising and a focused marketing approach in order to familiarise those in the 50+ age range with the potential benefits of moving to accommodation which offers a range of onsite facilities, the opportunity to socialise and flexible levels of support. Extra care schemes within the city operate on the basis of maintaining balanced communities based on the number of residents who are fully independent, needing no support at all, and the number of people who have support and/or care needs. Advice organisations, will therefore, need to understand more fully the effect of individual care needs on a person's housing choice in particular the levels of domiciliary care required and be able to articulate to prospective residents the associated benefits of supported housing options.

What we need to do
Strategic priority
9.4 Improve access to information and advice about the housing support options available to older people, through a range of channels and consulting mechanisms.
Review local authority housing advice process to make sure it includes information about all older people's housing schemes in the city and how to apply for it.
Share this information with a wide range of partners including private sector, Registered Social Landlords, voluntary agencies and in particular with the Stoke-on-Call service, Local Centres, One Stop Shops and social care colleagues.
Improve awareness of housing options and support services among vulnerable home owners, particularly around initiatives which can enable them to remain independent at home, including energy efficiency measures, aids and adaptations and home loan/equity release schemes.

Develop and implement a comprehensive communications and marketing plan for the new retirement/extra care schemes which will ensure that agencies providing housing advice and social care services fully understand this type of provision and can provide up to date information on how it is accessed, who it will benefit, and the costs involved.

10.0 Stakeholder Involvement

This draft strategy has been informed and shaped by the findings of the Supply and Demand Mapping Research 2012 which included consultation with a range of stakeholders. Interviews and questionnaires were undertaken with those organisations which commission and/or provide older people's accommodation and support services and local older people were consulted through a variety of mechanisms including EngAGE and the fifty+ forum. Feedback from these consultation exercises has informed the priorities and key actions of this draft strategy document and is outlined in Appendix B of this document.

The development of the draft strategy document has been directed by the Older People's Housing Strategy Steering Group which includes a range of key stakeholders including, statutory services, Registered Housing Providers and voluntary sector organisations. A formal consultation exercise will take place with a wider range of stakeholders and local people to ensure that the key strategic priorities reflect the needs of the local community.

11.0 Resources

The successful delivery of the Older People's Housing Strategy is dependent upon the commitment of a range of partners, public, private and third sector to allocate resources for the purpose of investing in and/or enabling the development of and improvements to older people's housing and housing related supported service provision in the city. A range of resources will be made available over the life of this strategy including:

- Public Services resources in particular Public Health Authority and Statutory Services Provider resources.
- Registered Social Landlords
- Local Authority Housing Revenue Account, land and capital assets.
- Homes and Communities Agency grant funding
- Private Sector Resources for example Private Finance Initiative.
- Private Sector leverage for example developer investment, land and assets, utility companies and private sector landlords.

The following table provides information on local authority resources available for 2014/15 which will particularly assist the independence of older people; these resources will, wherever possible, be supplemented by other funding opportunities as they become available.

Local Authority Budgets Older People's Housing and Support 2014/15		
Housing Related Support	Sheltered Schemes	£221,000
	Community Support Team	£527,940

Major Adaptations	Disabled Facilities Grant Private Sector and Registered Social Landlords	£1,200,000
	Council Housing Adaptations	£834,000
Social Care Occupational Therapist Service (SCOTS)	Small aids and adaptations, cross tenure.	£132,000
Energy Efficiency Measures	Community Energy Savings Programme	£108,000
Private Sector Renewal Loans	Loans for works to bring properties up to Decent Homes Standard	£250,000

12.0 Measuring Success, Monitoring Review and Reporting

In order to identify if our strategy has been successful, we need to be clear about what success will look like. We will monitor the following proposed outcomes and measures to review our progress:

- Deliver a range of affordable housing options suitable for older people for rent or buy in areas of least supply.
- Flexible matching criteria for older people on the housing waiting list reducing the waiting time for rehousing.
- Allocations policies which support the needs of older people who want to remain independent.
- Effective use of adapted properties by matching them to households with appropriate needs.
- Phased investment programme to remodel and modernise the council's sheltered stock.
- Appraisal of bungalow stock and delivery of sustainability plans.
- Increased take up of the loans available to assist people in the private sector to undertake repairs, specifically the council's local home improvements loan.
- Deliver four new retirement/extra care housing schemes by 2016.
- Better use of existing adapted stock, resulting in a reduction in the number of adaptations removed.
- Decrease in winter related deaths due to cold.
- Reduce heating bills in properties where energy efficiency measures have been undertaken.
- Improved marketing of extra care housing provision.
- Raised awareness of supported housing options by housing, social care and health professionals.

Information on performance measures will be reported regularly to the Older People's Housing Strategy Steering Group to inform future commissioning and development of services.

Glossary of Terms

Decent Homes	A minimum Standard that all social housing should have met by 2010, measured against four criteria to ensure properties are maintained in a reasonable state of repair, with reasonably modern facilities and services. It includes elements such as energy efficiency, central heating.
Indices of Multiple Deprivation	Indices of Multiple Deprivation are published by the Department for Communities and Local Government , and study poverty across a range of significant indicators, to calculate which places are the poorest.
Mandate for Change	Launched in July 2011, and underpinned by the development of an effective and confident council, the Mandate for Change sets out four strategic platforms for the transformation of the city of Stoke-on-Trent.
National Affordable Housing Programme (NAHP)	The National Affordable Housing Programme (NAHP) provides grant funding from the Homes and Communities Agency to increase the supply of affordable homes in England, delivered through its investment partners.
Private Finance Initiative (PFI)	A Private Finance Initiative (PFI) is a way of securing government money, usually for larger projects. PFI has been used by councils for nearly ten years to provide street lighting, neighbourhood centres, schools and hospitals. The process involves the council commissioning a partnership of private sector companies and organisations to provide services, such as housing, for a fixed term. Typically this is bound by contract to design, build, finance and operate the new facilities.
Registered Providers	Registered Providers, formerly known as Registered Social Landlords, are government funded not for profit organisations that provide affordable housing; they include Housing Associations, Trusts and Co-operatives. Registered Providers work with Local Authorities to provide homes; as well as developing land and building homes, they undertake a landlord function by maintaining properties and collecting rent.
Self-Financing and Housing Revenue Account Reform	Reforming council housing through the introduction of self-financing was a Coalition Agreement commitment which was implemented on 1 April 2012. The objectives of this reform were to give councils the resources, incentives and flexibility needed to manage their own housing stock for the long-term and to drive up quality and efficiency; as well as giving tenants the information they needed to hold their landlord to account, by replacing the previous system with one that has a clear relationship between the rent a landlord collects and the services provided to tenants.

Definitions of Housing Types for Older People

Category 1
Definition - Category 1 housing can typically be defined as a block of flats or group of bungalows, aimed at the more independent older person. The level of support services provided is minimal and may only include a hard wired or dispersed alarm. This is reflected in low Supporting People charges.
Category 2 Sheltered Housing
Definition - A typical sheltered scheme is a block of 30 to 40 flats with communal areas for tenants to use. Depending on the age of the building the size of individual flats can range from bed sits, in some cases with shared bathrooms, to one and two bedroom properties of more generous size. Category 2 housing seeks to facilitate a higher level of housing related support, helping to maintain the person within their community. Consequently Supporting People charges are higher than category 1 schemes.
Extra Care Housing
Definition - Also known as 'Very Sheltered Housing', 'Housing with Care' or 'Category 2.5'; the earliest extra care housing schemes were developed in the late 1980's. Today there are numerous models of extra care but typically schemes will offer round the clock care and support provided by an on-site staff team. In some schemes services are provided by a single provider, in others there may be a number of partners delivering services. Buildings are typically larger than sheltered schemes and offer additional facilities to residents such as a cafe/restaurant that can provide occasional or regular meals and health and well-being facilities that are available to residents of the scheme and to older people in the wider community. Extra Care allocations policies normally seek to achieve a balance between residents who have care needs and those who are fully independent, similarly, as the care resource is on site, it can be used flexibly to meet residents' changing needs. The care resource is typically purchased on a 'block' basis e.g. 300 care hours per week.
Retirement Village
Definition - Built since the 1990's retirement villages have very high numbers of older people on the same site in order to create economies of scale which spread the costs of the extensive communal facilities provided as part of the 'village vision'. Villages are usually an attractive mixed estate of properties for rent, sale or shared ownership, depending on the ethos and business model of the retirement village provider. There may be up to 5 levels of care available, including nursing care, however, the scheme in Stoke-on-Trent does not offer care services on site.

Appendix A

Links to other Policies, Strategies and Plans

National	Link
Laying the Foundations: A Housing Strategy for England 2011	http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/housing/housingstrategy2011
Welfare Reform Act 2012	http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2012/5/contents/enacted/data.htm
Localism Act 2011	http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2011/20/contents/enacted/data.htm
Living Well at Home Enquiry 2011	http://www.independentage.org/media/268815/living-well-at-home.pdf
Lifetime Homes, Lifetimes Neighbourhoods 2008	http://www.cpa.org.uk/cpa/lifetimehomes.pdf
Breaking the Mould – Revisioning Older People’s Housing 2011	http://s3-eu-west-1.amazonaws.com/pub.housing.org.uk/Breaking-The-Mould.pdf
On the Pulse: Housing Routes to Better Health	http://www.housinglin.org.uk/_library/Resources/Housing/OtherOrganisation/OnThePulse.pdf
Local	Link
Mandate for Change 2011	http://www.stoke.gov.uk/ccm/content/council-and-democracy/knowledge-management/mandate-for-change.en
Supply and Demand Mapping Research 2012	http://www.stoke.gov.uk/ccm/content/housing/council-housing/housing-options/older-peoples-housing-research.en
Housing Options for Older People in Stoke-on-Trent.	http://www.stoke.gov.uk/ccm/content/housing/council-housing/housing-options/housing-options-for-older-people.en
Housing and Accommodation Strategy for Older People 2008/ 2012	http://www.stoke.gov.uk/ccm/content/housing/private-housing/strategy-and-planning/housing-and-accommodation-strategy-for-older-people-2008---2012.en
Green Homes and Affordable Warmth Strategy 2012/15	http://www.stoke.gov.uk/ccm/content/housing/private-housing/strategy-and-planning/green-homes-and-affordable-warmth-strategy-2012-2015.en
Housing Renewal Assistance Policy	http://www.stoke.gov.uk/ccm/content/housing/private-housing/housing-grants-and-loans-assistance.en

Appendix B

Overview of Feedback from Older People as part of Supply and Demand Mapping Research 2012

(More detailed responses can be found in the Supply and Demand Mapping Research document at <http://www.stoke.gov.uk/ccm/content/housing/council-housing/housing-options/older-peoples-housing-research.en>)

In order to provide some context to the Supply and Demand Mapping Research, consultation was undertaken with local older people regarding their housing aspirations. The key objectives of the consultation were to:

- Understand housing preferences among older people in respect of the type, design and on-site facilities.
- Understand levels of awareness about the different housing options.
- Collect views regarding extra care accommodation in order to inform the marketing process for the developing PFI extra care schemes.
- Collect views about housing information and advice services in Stoke-on-Trent.

Format of the Consultation

Focus Groups were undertaken with:

Fifty and Counting Group (FACT)

Participants were from mixed tenures – generally this group had a good awareness of types of accommodation and services available within the city.

Burslem Day Care – Service Users

This service is provided by the council and service users tend to be frail elderly, reliant on care services at home and at the centre. The majority of participants lived in a traditional house or bungalow; one person lived in sheltered housing and another in an extra care village.

Both groups were shown a presentation about the different housing options available with photographic examples. Following the presentation both groups were asked a series of open-ended questions in relation to the type of housing required in the city and the services needed to help older people live independently.

EngAGE Fifty+ Forum

The EngAGE forum is managed by a consortium of voluntary sector providers; the purpose of forum is to share information about services in the city and provide the opportunity for older people to help shape services in Stoke-on-Trent.

Prior to the forum which is held quarterly; a number of outreach sessions were held with older people across the city; discussions at the outreach sessions were based on a questionnaire which asked people to consider the importance and appropriateness of the proposed priorities for the Older People's Housing Strategy 2014-19. This was followed up by a presentation at the Forum which was attended by around 100 local residents. Information was provided in respect of the following:

- Progress in the delivery of the Older People's Housing Strategy 2008-12
- Findings and recommendations of the Supply and Demand Mapping Research 2012
- The priorities of the updated Older People's Housing Strategy 2014-19.
- Timescale for development of the strategy.
- The formal consultation process prior to approval of the strategy.

New Accommodation

The EngAGE forum's view was that housing developments should meet the needs of the local community, recognising that many older people wish to remain in the same area when moving home. It was evident from the focus group respondents that the frailer older people taking part were more reluctant to move. In respect of scheme design there was a clear preference for two bedrooms, reaffirming previous research at both a local and national level. Extra care provision was a popular option for new provision although there was a perception that residents needed some level of care and that it is an expensive form of housing. Older people who were independent and considering moving at some time in the future expressed a preference for traditional accommodation in particular bungalows and/or flats as long as these were situated on the ground floor.

Staying Put or Moving

The overwhelming concern for older people is their preference to a) stay in their own home preferably until the end of their lives b) that assistance in the widest sense should be available to enable this and c) that when required, a range of suitable supported housing options should be available to suit older people with a range of support needs.

The consensus among the consultation participants was that a range of housing options are required in the city to meet older people's needs and preferences

Similarly there was a strong view that some older people prefer to remain in their own home and that services should be available to support people to do so, including housing related support, home care services, help with maintenance of their homes and gardens, suitable adaptations, and befriending services. Home owners appeared to be less aware of the services and accommodation options available in the city and about how to access them.

Extra Care Housing

Feedback from the focus groups and the EngAGE forum identified that older people have a number of misconceptions about extra care, particularly in terms of who is eligible and if care needs are a pre-requisite. While the EngAGE forum named a number of extra care schemes in the city and expressed the view that more schemes like this were needed, they understood this to be 'retirement village' accommodation and were unfamiliar with the term 'extra care' which a number of individuals assumed was only for people with substantial care needs and therefore a type of residential care. Feedback also identifies that many individuals consider the rent and service charges in the extra care schemes to be too expensive and unaffordable.

Housing Advice and Information

The Supply & Demand Mapping Research highlighted confusion among older people about how to apply for housing in the city, where to obtain housing advice and where and how to apply for it. Overall older people felt that there was not enough information available to make an informed choice, the expectation among older people was that information about all older people's housing schemes should be available from the City Council and there was frustration that this was not the case. The feedback from the focus group at Burslem Day Care Centre suggests that frailer older people with care needs are less likely to actively seek information about housing and are more likely to rely on friends and family. Similarly, this group were less aware of housing related support services available in the city.

Fuel Poverty and Health Issues

The ability to keep warm in the colder months was an issue raised by older people, in particular the fear of excessive bills to pay for heating over the winter months. Many older people considering moving to supported housing highlighted the inclusion of improved heating systems as a feature which might encourage them to move. Fuel poverty remains a major issue. It is linked to the poor quality of housing as much as to low income. It is particularly significant to older people, contributing to high levels of ill health and even deaths during cold weather. A recent survey indicated that just over 75% of pensioners living in private sector accommodation were experiencing fuel poverty.

Older People's Housing Steering Group

This is a multi-agency group set up to oversee the development of the strategy; it has looked in detail at the findings and recommendations of the Housing Supply and Demand Mapping Research 2012 and based on these findings agreed the key priorities of the Older People's Housing Strategy 2014-19.

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