

Gateshead Council's Housing Strategy for Older People 2007-2012



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Foreword

I am delighted to welcome you to Gateshead's Housing Strategy for Older People. The document outlines how we will work towards having the greatest possible impact on the lives of older people in Gateshead through the provision of housing and related services. The plan will help us prepare for the challenge we face to provide 21st century housing.



We have been successful in re-providing accommodation for older people living in Gateshead. Since 2001, over £14 million has been spent on the provision of extra care housing for older people in the borough and 89 new two-bedroom bungalows have also been built since 2004 working in partnership with housing associations. A series of initiatives including the establishment of a Newcastle/Gateshead Home Improvement Agency has also ensured that we have been able to help older home owners.

We have continued to carry out adaptations to people's homes to ensure they maintain their independence and we have pursued a number of initiatives to reduce fuel poverty including the setting up of a Warmzone in the borough.

In 2006 the council carried out a comprehensive study to determine the aspirations of older people and found that the issues to be addressed include poverty and the need to ensure that people continue to live independent and fulfilling lives.

Investment in housing supports improvements to an extensive range of priorities. Gateshead is nationally recognised as a council that provides excellent services to older people. This is demonstrated by the council's three star rating for adult social care from the Commission for Social Care Inspection (CSCI) for the third consecutive year and the three star status of Gateshead NHS Foundation Trust.

The challenges we face in Gateshead are varied and complex. This strategy will form the basis of an evolving process of improvement that will be monitored and developed with our partners and older people themselves. Together we will continue to ensure that older people in Gateshead have access to housing and services that are appropriate to their needs and help them to lead inclusive, fulfilling lives.

Councillor David Napier
Council Spokesperson for Housing

Summary

The Housing Strategy for Older People aims to re-balance the older persons' housing market, to ensure independence and social inclusion and ensure that older people have active and fulfilling lives within sustainable communities. It will work towards meeting the needs and aspirations of older people well into the future. It aims to provide more new accommodation, detail investment in existing housing across tenures, provide affordable housing and Lifetime Homes, and provide more extra care accommodation. It is based upon extensive stakeholder and service user consultation as well as research which supports our understanding of what we need to do.

The strategy will add to the active aging agenda set out in the government's *Opportunity Age* and will help us to achieve key objectives of our Sustainable Community Strategy, *Vision 2030*. We will use housing and related services to ensure life for older people is as active and fulfilling as in earlier years.

The strategy also provides a framework for delivery linked to the five key outcomes of Gateshead's Older People's Strategy . The Action Plan demonstrates the commitment of the Council to work with partners and stakeholders to address the housing issues of older people and develop solutions within specified timeframes.

The four housing objectives of this strategy are to:

- Ensure that the housing options available to older people more closely meet their aspirations and create choice;
- Support people to stay in their own home for longer;
- Support independence and social inclusion; and
- Ensure that older people have access to warm and eco friendly housing in safe and secure communities.

Through the Housing Strategy for Older People we will continue to make Gateshead a place where older people want to live and ensure that we achieve our overall vision for the borough of:

Local people realising their full potential, enjoying the best quality of life in a healthy, equal, prosperous and sustainable Gateshead.

Introduction

This is Gateshead's second *Housing Strategy for Older People*. The first strategy was produced in 2003 and highlighted the need to 'reinvent' sheltered accommodation for people into homes for life that can support people through extra care services in partnership with Housing 21.

Since 2003 the Council has worked successfully with partners and in consultation with older people to change the balance of housing and support to more community based services. More choice has been developed in social housing through the development of new two bedroom bungalows across the borough. Older homeowners have also been helped to keep their homes warm and well maintained through a series of initiatives.

In order to build on the successes that have been achieved and to meet challenges that have been highlighted in the Housing Needs and Support Survey 2006, research was commissioned in 2006 to assess older people's aspirations. The report, *Appraisal of Older People's Aspirations*, identified a need to ensure that housing strategies and services needed to be closely co-ordinated with the development of other services in the public and voluntary sector.

What we have done

Achievements to date

Since the first Housing Strategy for Older People was developed in 2003 considerable progress has been made by the Council, The Gateshead Housing Company and partners to address issues including:

Ensuring that the housing options available to older people more closely meet their aspirations and create choice:

- ✓ The Gateshead Housing Company (TGHC) was established in 2004 as an arms length management company to manage council stock including 14 sheltered schemes.
- ✓ TGHC achieved two star status from the Audit Commission's inspection in 2005 which released £230m to bring council stock up to Decent Homes standard by 2010.
- ✓ An Older Persons' Housing Manager appointed by TGHC to provide dedicated housing management of older persons' accommodation in the council stock.
- ✓ A Social Housing Agreement between the council and RSL partners has been established which provides the council with 100% nomination rights for all newly built social rented stock and subsequent 50% nominations on re-lets.
- ✓ 114 two and three bedroom bungalows have been built across the borough for rent and shared ownership by Registered Social Landlord (Housing Associations) 2003-2006.
- ✓ Five new extra care schemes have been developed by Housing 21 including a block of high rise flats at Callender Court, Beacon Lough East. These developments now provide 199 extra care units across the borough and include facilities which are used by the local community.

- ✓ £4.5m provided by Registered Social Landlords to complete a further 43 two bedroom bungalows by April 2008.

Supporting people to stay in their homes for longer

- ✓ £2.2m spent on carrying out adaptations to 976 council properties in 2003-2006.
- ✓ £1.9m spent on carrying out Disabled Facilities Grant adaptations to 243 properties in the private sector 2003-2006.
- ✓ Through Link Up, a handyperson service was established for people over 50 which includes a gardening service.
- ✓ In partnership with Link Up and Morrisons PLC, TGHC have established a Small Task Team to carry out minor work in council homes where the tenant is over 50.
- ✓ Newcastle/Gateshead Home Improvement Agency was established in 2005 to provide home maintenance grants and loan assistance to owner occupiers on low incomes.
- ✓ In partnership with the Anchor Staying Put scheme home maintenance grants have been provided to help older homeowners maintain their homes.

Supporting Independence and Social Inclusion

- ✓ Reviewed the role of Scheme Managers in Council stock and created resident Sheltered Scheme Officers and Mobile Sheltered Scheme Officers to provide floating support.
- ✓ Introduced a new, more transparent charging system for the services of Sheltered Scheme Officers.

- ✓ Care Call service launched in October 2004 to provide single telecare service across all tenures.
- ✓ The Council provides a community alarm service through approximately 11,200 connections in Gateshead and a range of telecare equipment is used to assist people to live independently and with confidence.
- ✓ Smart rooms developed within sheltered flat schemes to facilitate rapid hospital discharge and provide accommodation for care assessment.
- ✓ Project worker funded through Carewatch (an independent domiciliary care provider) to develop services that are culturally appropriate to older people in the Black Minority Ethnic community.
- ✓ Multi-agency Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual Forum has been established whose remit will include older people.

Ensuring that older people have access to warm and eco-friendly housing in safe and secure communities

- ✓ By December 2006, WarmZone had carried out work to 3,342 council properties and 3,276 in the private sector to reduce fuel poverty.
- ✓ Through partnership working with Warmzone, two officers have been seconded from the council to address the issue of fuel poverty and low income.
- ✓ Developed an Anti-Social Behaviour Strategy to reduce crime and perceived levels of anti-social behaviour across Gateshead.



The context

The national context

Nationally, there has been a lot of emphasis on encouraging providers of housing, care and support for older people to plan for the future and to provide 'joined up' housing and support packages which meet the aspirations of older people.

Opportunity Age is a national strategy on ageing which sets out the overall framework for developing a coherent strategy for an ageing population stressing the importance of enabling all older people to live and play an active role in the community.

White Paper - Our health, our care, our say: a new direction for community services sets a new direction for the whole health and social care system. It is envisaged that people will be given a stronger voice so that they are the major drivers of the care they receive.

A Sure Start to Later Life - Ending Inequality for Older People recommends a more responsive model for services for older people that addresses issues of exclusion and inequality.

The Housing Strategy for Older People 2007-2012 is based upon the guiding principles of the Sure Start Approach and will address the factors that lead to inequality and isolation.

The regional context

The Regional Housing Strategy for the North East (RHS) was produced by the North East Housing Board in 2007. The *Housing Strategy for Older People* will contribute to the objectives of the RHS and the emerging Tyne and Wear Housing Strategy by:

- working with Bridging Newcastle Gateshead (BNG) to promote the physical regeneration of the Pathfinder area, recreating cohesive and sustainable communities. New, high quality housing will be created including housing for older people;
- providing a framework for the restructuring of the older persons' housing market in the private sector and prioritising a review of the Council's sheltered and one bedroom bungalow schemes. Developing a Lifetime Homes policy and working with developers and partners to provide new housing will create more choice and ensure that there is a supply of accommodation that older people want;
- providing more choice in rural Gateshead will be a challenge and the development of an Affordable Housing Policy will be significant in achieving more affordable housing across all tenures in the rural west of the borough;
- rejuvenating the housing stock that older people live in through Decent Homes work in Council dwellings and by working with Warmzone and the Newcastle Gateshead Home Improvement Agency in the private sector to provide direct and loan assistance to improve homes; and
- working with Registered Social Landlords (RSLs) to develop new housing for rent and to develop housing of intermediate tenure such as shared ownership and equity share.

The local context

The vision for Gateshead is set out in the Sustainable Community Strategy, *Vision 2030*:

'Local people realising their full potential enjoying the best quality of life in a healthy, safe, prosperous and sustainable Gateshead'

Local Area Agreements (LAAs) have been established around the four main themes of the Sustainable Community Strategy which are:

- Children and Young People
- Healthier Communities and Older People
- Safer and Stronger communities
- Economic Development and Environment

Within the framework of LAAs and the Gateshead Strategic Partnership, it is also intended that an Older Persons' Assembly will be established to help the Council develop and monitor effective service delivery and provide an effective voice for older people.

Gateshead is divided into five neighbourhood management areas. From 2007 the role of these will be strengthened by the introduction of neighbourhood Forums each chaired by a member of the Council's Cabinet. The role of these Forums will be to ensure the co-ordination and delivery of services as well as strong and accountable leadership in each neighbourhood area. Housing and services to older people will therefore be integrated, delivered and monitored at a local level to ensure they meet the needs of the local community.

Housing Strategy 2007-2012

The Housing Strategy sets objectives for housing and housing services across all tenures. It links together all other housing related services into a five year housing plan and provides the framework for all housing related activity across the borough.

In developing a new Housing Strategy for Older People 2007-2012, a holistic approach to developing housing and related services has been taken based upon the vision of our Housing Strategy 2007-2012 which is:

"The best possible life chances for all through good quality, affordable homes in thriving, sustainable and inclusive communities"

Older Persons' Strategy

The *Older person's Strategy* will be completed by the council in 2007. This strategy will identify the key activities needed to deliver improved service outcomes for older people in Gateshead. The Housing Strategy for Older People will be delivered within the framework of this strategy.

Supporting People Five Year Plan 2000

The *Supporting People Five Year Plan* sets out how the development of high quality housing related support services will be achieved throughout the borough. It details how revenue funding will finance support services and how services for older people and other vulnerable groups will be commissioned.

Other supporting strategies

A number of other important plans strategies and initiatives will help us to achieve our vision for older people in Gateshead and a list of these is included at the end of this strategy.

The Gateshead Housing Company

The Gateshead Housing Company (TGHC) was established in January 2004 as an Arms Length Management Organisation to manage the Council's housing stock and ensure that properties reach Decent Homes standard by 2010. Up to £232m of additional funding has been secured to carry out this work following an Audit Commission inspection in 2005 which awarded TGHC a two star rating.

TGHC manages 3,722 older persons stock and as such is by far the most significant provider of rented housing for older people in Gateshead.

How we consulted

A unique, stand alone Overview and Scrutiny Committee was created in September 2005 where both the Council and external service providers looked at some of the services provided to older people in Gateshead. The recommendations made within the scrutiny process have been incorporated within this strategy and will be monitored through the action planning process.

Older people themselves have been involved in developing the Council's *Older Persons' Strategy*. A range of service specific consultation sessions were held with older people on a range of different issues. In particular, a large-scale event was held in June 2006 that was attended by over 75 older people. Key themes were discussed at the event including accessing housing and health care, reducing social exclusion and ensuring that older people can have a say in the issues that affect them.

An 'Intergenerational Event' was also carried out which involved both younger and older people from Gateshead coming together to discuss and debate common themes including housing, transport, health, leisure and barriers to services. The issues raised within the event informed both the recommendations made within the *Older Persons' Strategy* and the development of key objectives within this strategy.

The Gateshead Forum for Older People and voluntary groups who represent communities and interests have also been consulted. A full list of organisations that have been consulted is included at the end of this strategy.

The Housing Partnership Forum

The development of the Housing Strategy for Older People has been done within the framework of the Gateshead Strategic Partnership through the Housing Partnership Forum. The Forum has consulted RSL'S, developers and voluntary groups and will involve them further in developing effective methods of delivery such as Affordable Homes and Lifetime Homes policies.

Appraisal of Older People's Aspirations 2006

In 2006 the Council commissioned Outside UK Research and Development to carry out a study of older persons' aspirations. The resulting survey consisted of 1,000 face to face interviews and 3,000 postal questionnaires with residents over 55 years of age.

The sample was drawn across 22 wards. Fifteen-in-depth interviews were also carried out with representatives from a variety of organisations to provide context to the survey and three focus groups were arranged with recipients of older persons' services.



Key issues

More older people

Government policies focusing on the older population recommend consideration of anyone aged over 50 as an older person. Most people over the age of 50 will be healthy and active.

The age profile of Gateshead very closely reflects that of the North East and for England as a whole and shows that the more 'elderly' proportion of the older population was already nearly 23% of the population at the time of the Census in 2001 (Table 1).

Population projections developed in 2003 by the Government indicate that by 2009, 44,900 residents in Gateshead will be aged 60 or over, representing 23.8% of the population. This is set to increase to around 46,900 by 2011 (25.1% of population) and 51,700 by 2021 (28.0%).

There are significant implications for the delivery of services as almost one third of the population of the borough is likely to be over the age of 60 within the next 15 years. A projected 8% increase in the population 75 years and above will also mean that there is a need for the Council to plan and prioritise appropriate housing and support for the more frail elderly including measures to keep them in their own home and support independence.

In housing terms there needs to be a whole range of housing options available to ensure that people can continue to have the independence they have had throughout their adult life and that there is a 'seamless' transition into later life when support or a specific type of older persons' accommodation is needed.

Table 1. Age profile

Age Group	Gateshead %	NE %	England %
60-74	15.2	14.3	13.3
75+	7.6	7.4	7.0
Total %	22.8	21.7	20.3
Population	191,151	2,515,000	48,248,000

Source: 2001 Census CAS001

Table 2. Gateshead population projections (000s) 2003-2021

Age Group	Year					% Change	
	2003	2006	2011	2016	2021	03-11	03-21
60-74	28.6	28.7	30.6	31.1	33.3	7.0	16.4
75+	14.9	15.4	16.1	17.3	18.4	8.1	23.5
Total population	191.0	189.4	187.2	185.6	184.4	-2.0	-3.5

Source: ODPM 2003-based Population Projections

Key Facts 1

- 23.8% of residents in Gateshead will be aged 60 or over by 2009.
- This will rise to 25.1% by 2011 and 28% by 2021
- There is a projected 8% increase in over 75 year olds to 2021

Source: ODPM 2003 based Population Projections

There is a need for the Council to plan and prioritise appropriate housing and support for the more frail elderly including measures to keep them in their own home and support independence.

Housing choices do not meet people's aspirations and needs.

Key Facts 2

- Most residents aged 60 or over are owner occupiers.
- Three quarters of people over 55 will be owner occupiers by 2021.
- The highest demand of older home owners wishing to move is for two bedroom bungalows.
- 48.5% of owner occupiers wanting to move in the next five years will have an equity of more than £100,000

Older owner occupiers are increasingly going to require a wide range of support to maintain their home and to maintain their independence.

Discussions with developers within the Housing Partnership Forum suggest that owner occupiers aspirations to buy two bedroom bungalows will be limited in future as developers look to maximise the use of land and build smaller units. Alternatives such as apartments, shared ownership and equity share schemes will need to be considered.

Key Facts 3

- The Gateshead Housing Company manages 3,722 older persons' units of accommodation for the council.
- There is a falling demand for bedsits and smaller one bedroom council bungalows.
- The highest demand in the social rented sector is for two bedroom bungalows

Source: The Appraisal of Older Persons' Aspirations, (2006)

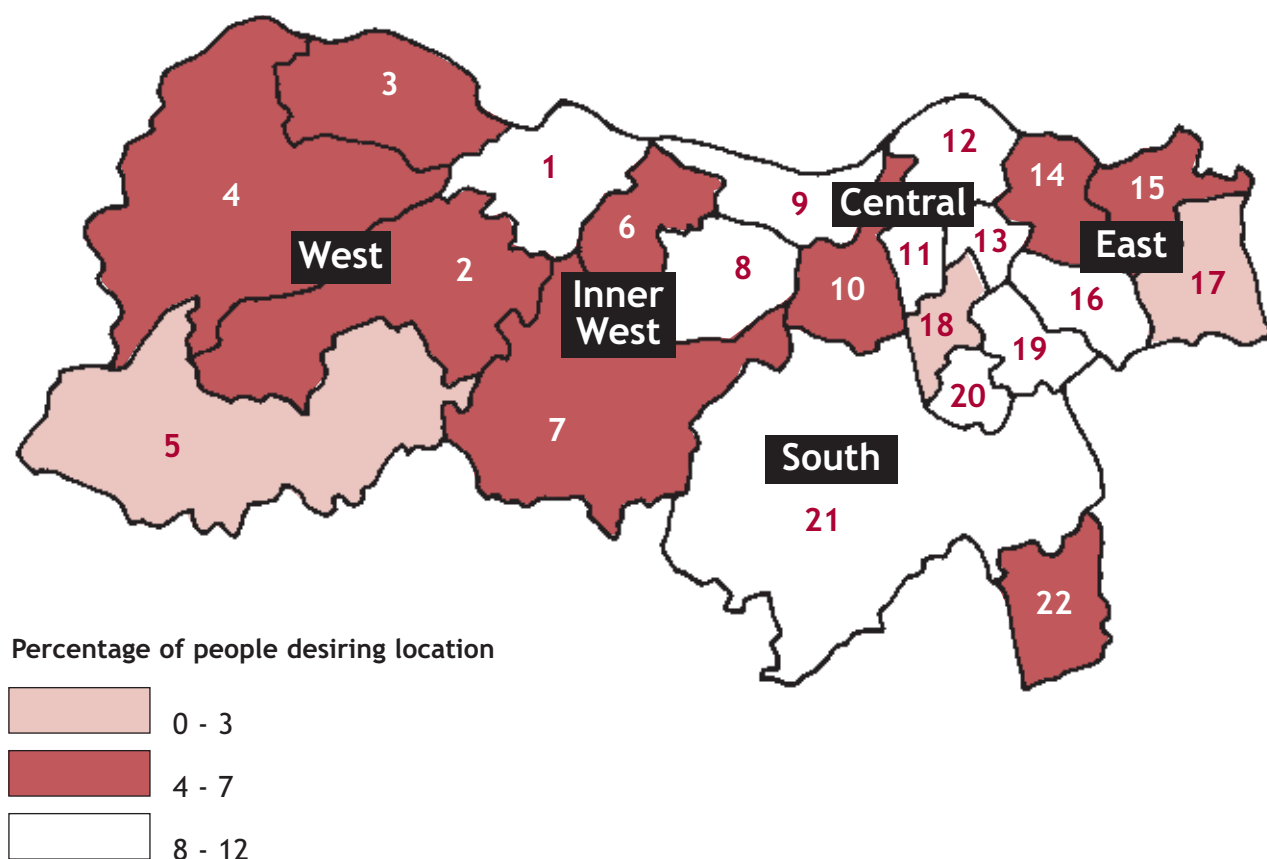
Older people living in larger family accommodation have a limited choice of alternatives and little incentive to move. Providing suitable alternatives would potentially reduce under occupation and free up family housing to meet the growing need from families.

The need to address the current surplus of unpopular Council property types and accommodation in unpopular areas needs to be closely related to the development of new accommodation for older people through the Housing Corporation's National Approved Development Programme (NAHP), other funding mechanisms and through the use of Section 106 Agreements and a Affordable Housing Policy on all new housing developments.

A review of older persons' accommodation in the Council stock will determine whether unpopular one bedroom and bedsit properties can be converted or whether alternative uses can be found for them. In some instances, accommodation will need to be decommissioned. Consultation with residents in carrying out such a review will be critical and the Council is committed to ensuring that this will be carried out appropriately and sensitively.

A new Social Housing Agreement with RSLs and other social housing providers will set out a clear framework for how new accommodation will be allocated including nominations through the newly introduced Choice Based Letting system.

Where older people want to live



Wards

- | | |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. Blaydon | 12. Bridges |
| 2. Winlaton & High Spen | 13. Deckham |
| 3. Ryton, Crookhill & Stella | 14. Felling |
| 4. Crawcrook & Greenside | 15. Pelaw & Heworth |
| 5. Chopwell & Rowlands Gill | 16. Windy Nook & Whitehills |
| 6. Wickham North | 17. Wardley & Leam Lane |
| 7. Wickham South & Sunnyside | 18. Low Fell |
| 8. Dunston Hill & Wickham East | 19. High Fell |
| 9. Dunston & Teams | 20. Chowdene |
| 10. Lobley Hill & Bensham | 21. Lamesley |
| 11. Saltwell | 22. Birtley |

Source: *The Appraisal of Older Persons' Aspirations*, (2006)

There is a basic mismatch across all tenures between where older people aspire to live and the location of existing accommodation. The most desired locations are Low Fell, Wardley/Leam Lane and the west while existing older persons' accommodation across all tenures tends to be in the more central areas of the borough. A key objective of this strategy is to address the gap between supply and demand.

People want to stay in their home

Key Facts 4

- Limiting long - term illness (68.7%) is significantly above the national average (50.9%).
- Poor health is a barrier to independence.
- Resources for Disabled Facilities Grants remained the same in real terms from 2003-2006 but demand has increased

Source: The Appraisal of Older Persons' Aspirations, (2006)

Costs and waiting times for adaptations remain major barriers to making homes suitable for people to continue independent living as they grow older. The amount of Council stock needing adaptations vastly exceeds the resources currently available and there was no allocation of resources from the Single Housing Investment Pot (SHIP) for 2006-2008.

Older people want to be independent and maintain a high quality of life

Key Facts 5

- Three quarters of respondents to the AOPA study were in receipt of some form of financial support.
- 37% of respondents had an income of less than £500 per month and 70% had an income of less than £700
- Nearly 62% of older people live alone.
- Nearly 75% of over 75s live on their own.

Source: The Appraisal of Older Persons' Aspirations, (2006)

Improved access to amenities and leisure activities may help to reduce isolation. Linkages between housing providers and the Council's Sports and Leisure Service could play a significant part in ensuring older people are able to stay active and also enjoy the company of others.

Home design and layout for social interaction, interior space and garden/court space location will be important aspects of housing design in the future to ensure that older people are not isolated in their own homes.



Transport issues have a considerable impact upon where older people wish to live and can also have a significant effect upon social inclusion and maintaining independence.

For many older and frail people who cannot use a car or get easy access to bus or metro services, small transport networks might be more suitable. Individualised transport for more disabled people might involve focusing on the use of accessible taxis rather than subsidising public transport.

There is also an increasing use of mobility scooters that needs to be planned for, both in terms of storage and pavement width.

Homes are not warm and neighbourhoods feel unsafe

Key Facts 6

- 17.5% of social sector tenants and 10.9% of owner of owner occupiers find it difficult to meet their fuel bills.
- Fear of crime is a significant factor for older people and contributes to feelings of isolation.

Source: The Appraisal of Older Persons' Aspirations, (2006)

The need for affordable warmth is an important priority for older people who generally spend a higher proportion of their time in their home and may suffer poor circulation and less mobility.

A view within the Gateshead Forum for Older People is that housing for older people should be integrated with ordinary housing in mixed community estates. This will lead to greater sense of safety among older people, as they would feel less likely to be targeted for crime.

Housing and related services must ensure equality of access

Gateshead Council is committed to ensuring equality of access to housing for all older people. Changes in housing policy will be formulated in consultation with BME communities, people with disabilities and people who may experience inequality in accessing housing and services.

A Diversity and Housing Strategy will be developed in 2007 to ensure that the council is working towards removing barriers to housing. An Equality Impact Assessment has been carried out on this strategy and will be monitored and updated on an annual basis.

Key Facts 7

- A high percentage of the BME community live in the Bridging Newcastle Gateshead pathfinder area.
- The largest faith group is the Orthodox Jewish Community.
- The number of disabled people needing adaptations to their home has grown since 2003 but the resources available to meet this need has reduced in real terms.

Source: The Appraisal of Older Persons' Aspirations, (2006)

Although numbers of older people in BME groups are relatively small, they have specific cultural and religious needs. Creating housing options and providing support to maintain independence in these communities therefore needs to be appropriate to their needs.

The Gateshead Housing Company will carry out consultations with older people to assess what needs to be done to make existing older persons' housing within Council stock more suitable for diverse needs and ensure that there is equality of access.

What we need to do

Where we want to be

The Council together with its partners and The Gateshead Housing Company will:

- Ensure that the housing options available to older people more closely meet their aspirations and create choice;
- support people to stay in their own home for longer;
- support independence and social inclusion; and
- ensure that older people have access to warm and eco friendly housing in safe and secure communities.

How we will get there

We will ensure that housing options available to older people more closely meet their aspirations and create choice by:

- Improving the quality and sustainability of stock in both the public and private sector;
- restructuring the social housing market to ensure that housing is of a type and in locations which meet the aspirations of older people;
- working with partners to provide new homes in all tenures which meet the needs of older people;
- developing an affordable housing policy to ensure that quality and choice is available;
- providing culturally appropriate housing choices for older people in BME and faith communities; and
- reducing under occupation by providing incentives for older people to transfer to smaller properties.

We will support older people to stay in their own home for longer by:

- Carrying out adaptations to their home where needed;
- encouraging all developers to build adaptable housing through a Lifetime Homes policy; and
- helping poorer home owners to improve and maintain their homes.

We will support independence and social inclusion by:

- Continuing to develop outcome based support services;
- continuing to promote the development of telecare and assistive technology;
- ensuring housing, support, transport and leisure are co-ordinated through the council's Older Persons' Strategy;
- ensuring support services are culturally sensitive to the needs of BME and faith groups; and
- providing housing which meets the cultural and religious needs of BME and faith communities.

We will ensure that older people have access to warm and eco-friendly homes in safe and secure communities by:

- Working with developers and partners to ensure new housing meets standards set out in our local Agenda 21 Strategy and Fuel Poverty Strategy;
- developing an eco-homes policy as Supplementary Planning Guidance within the Unitary Development Plan
- continuing to work with Warmzone to promote measures which increase the thermal value of homes and increase affordable warmth ;
- working with the police and partners in communities to achieve the objectives of Gateshead's Community Safety Strategy and Drug Misuse Strategy.

How will we know when we are there?

Focusing activity and targeting resources will have the greatest impact on improving outcomes for older people in Gateshead. These outcomes are:

- more housing choice;
- more elderly people helped to live longer in their own home;
- more flexible support and care being provided to enable independence;
- more older people living in homes that are eco friendly and warm; and
- more older people feeling safe and secure in their homes.

The Housing Strategy for Older People 2007-2012 will be delivered through a robust Action Plan monitored by the Housing Partnership Forum. An annual update and a Diversity Impact Assessment will be carried out to ensure actions remain focused and equitable.

The government has developed quality of life indicators as part of its national strategy on ageing and there will be a growing role for Local Area Agreements.

These outcomes, targets and indicators will be aimed at improving local service performance and there will be an opportunity to develop housing indicators as part of a quality of life approach.

There are some specific targets that local Councils and their partners must reach such as Public Service Agreement (PSA) 8 which measures the proportion of older people supported to live in their current home. More housing specific targets may also be developed as part of the emerging national housing strategy for older people.



Delivery and monitoring

Gateshead's Corporate and Planning Framework supports the achievement of our vision by increasing capacity and achieving service excellence. We aim to have a clear link between our plans to ensure delivery of our agreed outcomes to achieve better services for the local people of Gateshead.

Improvement policy



Performance Management Framework

The diagram on the previous page shows how the framework fits together from the Sustainable Community Strategy, the Local Area Agreements and departmental service plans.

The focus is on more strategic improvement targets which are outcome based and reflect local priorities. The improvement targets agreed by Gateshead Strategic Partnership will be used as the basis of reporting to local people on progress against priorities. The achievement of the improvement targets along with the Local Area Agreement will also be the foundations of discussions with central government around performance and improvement.

The emerging emphasis on quality of life, and the development of quality output measures for LAAs on health, social care and related activities are expected to be negotiated before 2008 as Area Profiles.

The Housing Partnership Forum will continue to play a significant role within this framework to ensure partners and stakeholders have an input into the development of performance measures and help us monitor our outcomes.

The new area based Neighbourhood Forums will ensure that housing and services are developed in a co-ordinated way in the five Neighbourhood Areas of Gateshead.



How we will fund what we need to do

The main risk to delivering our priorities is the availability of resources. The Council has therefore considered a number of methods of funding the delivery of our objectives. We will use a mixed approach to ensure that the most appropriate solutions are used to meet the various needs across the borough.

As well as the domiciliary care service the main element of revenue support in relation to older persons' accommodation is through *Supporting People (SP)*. 88% of services provided under the SP programme are for older people. The Supporting People Five Year Plan 2005-2011 details how services will be prioritised and allocated.

Public Sector Investment

The Council will continue to work with partners to maximise the amount of public sector resources that are invested in Gateshead including:

- the Housing Corporation's National Approved Housing Programme (NAHP);
- the Single Housing Investment Pot (SHIP);
- Warmzone; and
- Newcastle/Gateshead Home Improvement Agency.

The Council's own assets will also continue to play a significant role including both revenue and capital resources and there is commitment to ensure that these are targeted to achieve the maximum impact upon leverage of resources and achieving objectives.

Working with The Gateshead Housing Company (TGHC)

The Council is the major provider of older persons' accommodation for rent in Gateshead working with TGHC as managers. Currently, £230m is being spent on ensuring all Council properties are up to Decent Homes Standard by 2010 and this will have a considerable impact upon improving the quality of older persons' accommodation in the Council stock.

Planning Policy

A number of our priorities will be met through the requirements of developers set out in the emerging Unitary Development Plan. Attached to this will be planning policies setting minimum levels on all new developments for affordable housing, Lifetime Homes and Ecohomes. Significant investment will therefore be expected from developers through planning gain and the use of planning agreements under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

Private Sector Finance

Private finance will be utilised where it is determined that it is an effective means of facilitating development, sharing risk and experience and leveraging in external resources. Prudential borrowing will also be used where appropriate.

Conclusion

The *Housing Strategy for Older People 2007-2012* aims to re-balance the older persons' housing market, to ensure independence and social inclusion and ensure that older people have active and fulfilling lives within sustainable communities. It will work towards meeting the needs and aspirations of older people well into the future. It aims to provide more new accommodation, detail investment in existing housing across tenures, provide affordable housing and Lifetime Homes, and provide more extra care accommodation.

This strategy is based upon extensive stakeholder and service user consultation as well as research which supports our understanding of what we need to do. Our aims, objectives and priorities are ambitious and challenging and this strategy makes clear what we want to achieve, what the outcomes will be and how we will measure success.

To assist in the delivery of this strategy we are putting together robust plans and policies in consultation with partners. We will work with stakeholders and older people to help us monitor progress and we will continue to work together within the council to ensure that what we are doing is effective and ensures the best use of resources.

This strategy will add to the active aging agenda set out in Opportunity Age and will help us to achieve key objectives of our sustainable communities strategy, *Vision 2030*. We will use housing and related services to ensure life for older people is as active and fulfilling as in earlier years.

The *Housing Strategy for Older People 2007-2012* is about participation and well being. It is meant to broaden the discussion about housing need to include those who do not need care and support. The care and support related housing needs of the minority of older people represent only one part of their housing interests and only a small part of their lives.

Above all, the strategy provides a framework for delivery. The Action Plan included in this strategy demonstrates the commitment of the council to work with partners and stakeholders to address the housing issues and develop solutions within specified timeframes. Through partnership we can ensure that all older people in Gateshead have access to the housing and related services that they need now and well into the future.

Action Plan 2007-2012

This Action Plan details the action to be taken over the five-year lifespan of the strategy and in some cases beyond to 2015. It is based around four objectives which are:

- Ensure that the housing options available to older people more closely meet their aspirations and create choice;
- support people to stay in their own home for longer;
- support independence and social inclusion; and
- ensure that older people have access to warm and eco friendly housing in safe and secure communities.

The Action Plan is based upon actions identified as needed in other strategies, plans or research. These are:

Appraisal of Older People's Aspirations	(AOPA)
The Housing Strategy 2007-2012	(HS)
Housing Need and Support Survey 2006	(HNSS)
Older Persons Strategy	(OPS)
Regional Housing Strategy	(RHS)
Supporting People Five Year Plan 2005-2010	(SPP)
The Private Sector Housing Renewal Strategy	(RS)
The Tyne and Wear Housing Strategy	(TWHS)
Unitary Development Plan	(UDP)

1. Ensure that the housing options available to older people more closely meet their aspirations and create choice

Action	Milestone	Cost	Programme	Timescale	Evidence/ Relevant Strategy	Impact of Action	Officer/Partnership Responsible
Work with partners and The Gateshead Housing Company to reprovide for unpopular accommodation with two bedroom units in areas older people want to live	Reprovision of existing bedsits and unpopular one bedroom accommodation with two bedroom units	£230m	NAHP Planning gain through Section 106 Agreements Resources of RSLs	By 2015	HS, TWHS, OPS, RHS	Rebalance the social rented housing market and increase choice by providing new two bedroom accommodation for rent and shared ownership by 2015	Strategy Development Manager/ Development and Enabling Officer
Develop 48 new two bedroom bungalows across Gateshead	48 new two bedroom bungalows created at various locations across Gateshead	£8.3m	NAHP RSL resources	By April 2008	HNSS, HS, OPS, RHS	Provide extra housing choice and promote reprovision of housing for older people living in under occupation in family houses	Strategy Development Manager/ Development and Enabling Officer
Carry out a review of council sheltered schemes	Develop plan for unpopular 1 bed and bedsit council accommodation	No capital cost	No cost in review Potential cost of carrying out findings. As yet unknown	By 2008	Identified as needed by AOPA study RHS	Plan the reduction and reprovision of unpopular housing	TGHC/ Strategy Development Manager
Reprovide two new 20 unit sheltered schemes	20 two bed unit sheltered schemes	£1.5m	NAHP Planning Gain Private Finance	By 2015	HS, TWHS RHS	Increase the number of sheltered schemes providing 2 bedroom accommodation by 2015	TGHC/ Strategy Development Manager
Provide 10 units for older Jewish people which meet their cultural needs	Provide 10 units for older Jewish people which meet their cultural needs by April 2010	£1.5m	NAHP SHIP BNG	By 2010	SPP, HS, TWHS, RHS	Provide supported accommodation for Orthodox Jewish Community	Strategy Development Manager BNG

Action	Milestone	Cost	Programme	Timescale	Evidence/ Relevant Strategy	Impact of Action	Officer/Partnership Responsible
Develop retirement village	Provide mixed tenure development by 2015	£5m	NAHP Planning gain through Section 106 Private finance	By 2015	HNSS, HS, RHS	Development of mixed tenure retirement village for older people	Strategy Development Manager/Older Person's Partnership
Promote understanding of Choice Based Letting amongst older people	Increase understanding of Choice Based Letting by 2008	£15K	Housing Revenue Account	By 2008	Following research in AOPA study	Older people can apply to the council housing more easily by April 2008	TGHC
Develop new Social Housing Agreement	Completion of Social Housing Agreement	No capital cost	N/A	By Sept 2007	HS	Agreement reached with RSL partners regarding nomination rights and protocols for partnership by 2007	Development and Enabling Officer/ Housing Partnership Forum
Develop Affordable Housing Policy	Develop Affordable Housing policy on partnership with Housing Partnership Forum	No capital cost	N/A	By 2008	HS, Planning Policy, RHS	Section 106 Agreement protocol would provide a framework to implement Affordable Housing Policy on all new developments by April 2008	Development Control Manager/Housing Partnership Forum

Action	Milestone	Cost	Programme	Timescale	Evidence/ Relevant Strategy	Impact of Action	Officer/Partnership Responsible
<p>Introduce an under occupation policy for council stock which provides housing and monetary incentives for people living in underoccupation to move to smaller accommodation</p>	<p>Council and TGHC to develop policy and incentives to encourage older people to move to older persons' accommodation and free up family accommodation</p>	<p>Not known</p>	<p>Costs to be assessed. Will need to be funded through: Housing Revenue Account and Capital Programme</p>	<p>2007/2008</p>	<p>Findings of AOPA show need to deal with under-occupation of family housing by older people</p>	<p>Free up family housing by giving older people incentives and a choice of suitable alternative accommodation which more closely fits their needs by 2007.</p>	<p>Strategy Development Manager/TGHC</p>

2. Support people to stay in their own home for longer

Action	Milestone	Cost	Programme	Timescale	Evidence/ Relevant Strategy	Impact of Action	Officer/Partnership Responsible
Complete Decent Homes work to properties in the council stock	Improve the housing standards of older people living in all types of council accommodation By 2010	£230m	Decent Homes Funding	By 2010	HS, TWHS, RHS	Council stock brought up to Decent homes Standard	TGHC
Implement new Health and Safety rating system in the private sector	Implement the Housing Health and Safety Rating system which replaced the housing fitness standard	150K	Capital programme SHIP	From 2008	HS, TWHS, RS, OPS RHS	Older people will be able to live in safer housing in the private sector by identifying hazards and using enforcement action where necessary	Housing Renewal and Building Control
Selective licensing of private rented sector	Licensing of landlords as part of wider area renewal initiatives	£1m	Revenue Funding	From April 2007	HS, RS	Older people will be able to live in well managed housing in a good state of repair in the private rented sector in areas where licensing of private rented sector is applied.	Housing Renewal and Building Control Gateshead Private Landlord Forum
Help older people maintain their own home through the Newcastle/ Gateshead Home Improvement Agency	Implementation of a home maintenance loan scheme in partnership with Anchor Staying Put scheme by 2011	£3m	Home Improvement Agency/ Anchor Staying Put SHIP	2011	HS, TWHS, RS, OPS, SPP RHS	Older people have helped to maintain their own home.	Housing Renewal and Building

Action	Milestone	Cost	Programme	Timescale	Evidence/ Relevant Strategy	Impact of Action	Officer/Partnership Responsible
Extend the handyperson service in partnership with LinkUp and Anchor Staying Put which will help vulnerable old people stay in their own home	Develop low level support service for older people	£1.5m	Anchor Staying Put LinkUp SHIP	From April 2007	HS, RS, OPS RHS	Extend the provision of the private sector handy person scheme across the borough outside the BNG area.	Housing Renewal and Building Control
Maintain adaptations to homes at the rate of 5 properties per 100 dwellings in all tenures	Maintain adaptations at rate specified in White Paper	£10m	Capital Programme SHIP (Disability Facilities Grants)	To 2015	SPP, HS, TWHS Recommendation of 'Our Health our Care' white Paper	Create options for people to live independently and stay in own home.	TGHC Housing Renewal and Building Control
Develop Lifetime Homes Policy	Developers to provide 10% of all new properties built to Lifetime Home Standard	No capital cost	N/A	2007/08	UDP, HS RHS	Help people maintain independence and stay in their home through the development of homes that can be adapted.	Spatial Development/ Strategy Development Manager/ Development and Enabling Officer plus Housing Partnership Forum
Develop a Lifetime Homes pilot in partnership with a private developer for owner occupation	Pilot scheme developed to showcase Lifetimes Homes policy	£3m	Through implementation of Lifetime Homes Policy and planning gain on new site SHIP	2010/2011	SPP, HS, TWHS RHS	Demonstration of the cost effectiveness of building to Lifetime Homes Standard.	Spatial Development/ Strategy Development Manager/ Development and Enabling Officer plus Housing Partnership Forum

Action	Milestone	Cost	Programme	Timescale	Evidence/ Relevant Strategy	Impact of Action	Officer/Partnership Responsible
Introduce a dedicated housing management service within council sheltered accommodation	TGHC develop a specific management service for older people living in sheltered accommodation	No capital cost	Housing Revenue Account	To be introduced by 2008	TGHC to carry out a pilot scheme on one sheltered scheme to assess feasibility. RHS	Provide dedicated housing management service for older people living in council sheltered schemes	TGHC

Action	Milestone	Cost	Programme	Timescale	Evidence/ Relevant Strategy	Impact of Action	Officer/Partnership Responsible
Develop an Assistive Technology Strategy	Strategic plan developed for the use of assistive technology	No capital cost	No specific funding	Draft by July 2007	HS, OPS, RHS	Strategy and action plan to deliver assistive technology across Gateshead.	Head of Adult Care Services
Ensure older people have access to a wide range of assistive technology	Upgrade existing Care Call equipment to PNC 4. Older people feel safe and reassured within the home	78k	PTG	Ongoing	HS, TWHS RHS	Access to various assistive technology solutions	Care Call Manager
Develop new call centre for CareCall	New state of the art Call Centre developed for Care Call	250k	PTG	B 2008	RHS	Provide dedicated centre for Care Call system	Care Call Manager
Promote the use of telecare equipment and access through primary care	Roadshows/ Briefings Workshops and Marketing	No capital cost	PTG	To 2015	HS, TWHS RHS	Health staff signpost older people to telecare service.	Care Call Manager

4. Ensure that older people have access to warm and eco friendly housing in safe and secure communities

Action	Milestone	Cost	Programme	Timescale	Evidence/ Relevant Strategy	Impact of Action	Officer/Partnership Responsible
Tackle fuel poverty in the private sector through Warmzone	Ongoing	£5m	Warmzone Capital programme SHIP	To 2015	HS, TWHS, RS RHS	Increase affordable warmth in older persons' housing Reduce fuel poverty	
Upgrade thermal insulation to council housing, working in conjunction with Gateshead Warmzone and TGHC Decent Homes Programme	Improve thermal insulation of council properties by 2010		Warmzone SHIP	Complete by April 2010	HS, TWHS, RS RHS	Improved levels of thermal insulation and reduced fuel poverty	TGHC/Operation Manager
Develop an EcoHomes Policy	EcoHomes policy in place for all new housing developments	No capital cost	N/A	By 2008	UDP	Ensure all new housing is energy efficient to reduce fuel poverty and CO2 emission	Spatial Development Local Agenda 21 Officer Housing Partnership Forum

Consulted organisations

Age Concern

Anne Marshall
Age Concern
341-343 High Street
Gateshead
NE8 1EG

Public Patient and Involvement Forum

c/o North of Tyne Patients Voice
Ground floor
Old Stables
Grey's Yard
Morpeth
NE61 1QD

Housing Partnership Forum

Richard Hall
Strategy Development Manager
Gateshead Council
Civic Centre
Regent Street
Gateshead
NE8 1HH
0191 433 2632
richardhall2@gateshead.gov.uk

Supporting People Forum

Ian Ramshaw
Supporting People Manager
Gateshead Council
Civic Centre
Regent Street
Gateshead
NE8 1HH
0191 433 2491
ianramshaw@gateshead.gov.uk

Link Up in Gateshead

Penny Gray
Project Manager
Older Persons Services
Community Based Services
Gateshead Council
Prince Consort Road
Gateshead
NE8 4HJ
0191 433 8218
pennygray@gateshead.gov.uk

Tenants' Forum

Evelyn Brown
Partnership Officer
Gateshead Council
Civic Centre
Gateshead
NE8 1HH
0191 433 2415
evelynbrown@gateshead.gov.uk

Gateshead Forum for Older People

c/o Worcester Green Day Centre
Alexandra Road
Gateshead
NE8 1NH
0191 420 6854
gatesheadforum@hotmail.co.uk

Visual Impairment Forum

John Storey
Ward 3
Bensham Hospital
0191 478 5959
john.storey@sightservice.co.uk

Related strategies

Private Sector Housing Renewal Strategy

The Private Sector Housing Renewal Strategy sets objectives for private sector housing and housing renewal including helping vulnerable people, adaptations and grants and loans.

Gateshead Unitary Development Plan

The Council, as Local Planning Authority, has a statutory duty to prepare a Unitary Development Plan (UDP) which sets out the council's policies and proposals for land use, transport and the environment. The Plan provides a context for a range of initiatives in the private and public sectors, as well as forming the basis for the consideration of applications for planning permission.

Community Cohesion Strategy 2006-2009

This strategy will ensure that the diversity of people's backgrounds and circumstances are appreciated and valued and that those from different backgrounds have similar life opportunities.

Community Safety and Drugs Misuse Strategy

This strategy sets out Gateshead Local Strategic Partnership's approach to tackling crime and fear of crime in the borough. It will ensure that local people live in a safe, fear-free and tolerant community.

Culture Strategy - 'Spreading our Wings' 2005 - 2010

The strategy addresses the key challenges for culture in Gateshead, to enable local communities to be stronger and creative to enable more people to enjoy more active and healthy lifestyles. It also promotes the use of more cultural facilities and services to attract more people to live, visit and work in Gateshead.

Gateshead PCT Local Delivery Plan 2005-08

Gateshead PCT Local Delivery Plan sets out the priorities and direction for NHS services in Gateshead over the next three years and forms the basis of investment and commissioning decisions of the PCT. The LDP aims to raise standards, tackle inequality, make provision more accessible and flexible and shape services around the needs and choices of local people.

Local Agenda 21 Strategy

This Strategy details how Gateshead will reduce CO2 emissions and promote energy efficiency in Gateshead including housing.

Fuel Poverty Strategy

This Strategy details how Gateshead will reduce fuel poverty and promote energy efficiency in Gateshead.

Regional Housing Strategy

The Regional Housing Strategy sets four objectives for housing and housing services across the north-east regions. It links together all other housing related services into a five year housing plan and provides the framework for all housing related activity across the region.

Tyne and Wear Housing Strategy

The Tyne and Wear Housing Strategy sets objectives for housing and housing services across the five local authority areas of Tyne and Wear. It links together the housing priorities of all of the authorities to provide priorities and objectives for the sub-region.

Vision 2030

Vision 2030 is Gateshead's Sustainable Communities Plan which provides the framework for Local Area Agreements and the Gateshead Strategic Partnership.

All strategies link to the objectives of Vision 2030.

Other reading

A New Housing Strategy for the North-East (2005)

North East Housing Board

Appraisal of Older People's Aspirations: Final Report (2006)

Gateshead Council
www.gateshead.gov.uk

A Sure Start to Later Life: ending inequalities for older people (2006)

London, ODPM

Delivering housing for an ageing population: informing housing strategies and planning policies (2005)

HOPDEV
www.hodevhousingcare.org

Gateshead Housing Need and Support Study (2006)

Gateshead Council
www.gateshead.gov.uk

Local Quality of Life Indicators: Supporting Local Communities to Become Sustainable (2005)

Audit Commission
www.audit-commission.gov.uk

Opportunity Age: meeting the challenges of ageing in the 21st century (2005)

London: Stationary Office, Cm6466

Our health, our care, our say: a new direction for community services (2006)

London: Stationary Office

Preparing older people's strategies (2003)

ODPM

Quality and choice for Older People's Housing: a strategic framework-the story so far (2001)

London: ODPM/DH

The economic contribution of older people (2004)

Age Concern

Appendix 1

Housing Strategy for Older People - Communications Policy

Introduction

The overall aim of the Sustainable Communities Strategy, *Vision 2030* is to ensure:

Local people realising their full potential enjoying the best quality of life in a healthy, safe, prosperous and sustainable Gateshead'

The Council, together with its partners will work towards this aim to:

- Support people to stay in their own home for longer;
- provide better information on housing related services, market accommodation better and consult affected older people and their carers on the delivery of the strategy;
- carry out more detailed research to better inform actions at a local level; and
- provide a choice of specialist accommodation for older people and other client groups.

Ultimately, we need to restructure part of Gateshead's housing provision for older people and to promote sustainable existing and new housing developments and support services so that older people enjoy a good quality of life. To this end, the Housing Strategy for Older People 2007-2012 has been developed to complement the work being undertaken through the development of an Older Persons' Strategy.

Gateshead Council's Housing Services is taking the lead in co-ordinating the Housing Strategy for Older People, in partnership with:

- Other Council services;
- The Gateshead Housing Company when actions involve Council stock and tenants; and
- housing associations.

External communication with people affected by the Housing Strategy for Older People

Principles

Open, two-way communication is essential to how we execute the Housing Strategy for Older People.

People affected by the Housing Strategy for Older People will be treated as individuals and have advocates appointed to promote their point of view if required.

Information about the Strategy should be accessible and widely available.

All spoken and written communication will be clear and easy to understand and up to date. Large print, audio format and Braille are available upon request to the Communications Unit. This service is provided through AIRS.

All printed publicity materials including suitable articles for Council News will be developed in partnership with the council's communications service and where relevant, The Gateshead Housing Company's communications officer.

All concerns and complaints will be seen in a positive light.

Method

A. Publicity information will explain the reasons behind council decisions and The Gateshead Housing Company's role in delivering them where applicable. It will also promote the benefits of the changes set out in the Strategy. All information leaflets will be designed and printed in the same corporate 'house styles' - either the Council's or The Gateshead Housing Company's depending on whether the information is at a strategic or operational level.

B. Accessible information - Individual visits will be carried out on request, to ensure that people with different needs understand what will happen and what their choices are under the strategy.

C. Consultation with diverse groups and communities will be carried out to ensure that the Strategy considers the needs of different groups of people.

D. Use of e-communication will be explored and used to the best possible effect.

Internal communication

Principles

We will keep council employees informed of issues and events regarding the provision of accommodation for older people and how it will impact upon them.

We will consult and involve our staff through formal and informal channels about the development of policies, practice and procedures.

Method

A. Management meetings will be used to inform staff of new developments and changes to be executed under the Housing Strategy for Older People. This will include Housing Services and Services for Older People.

The Housing and Older Peoples' Heads of Service will ensure Service Managers are aware of any reports to Cabinet on the implementation of the Strategy, and this information in turn will be discussed at relevant Management meetings.

Some items within Cabinet reports may be of a confidential nature and will only be discussed with appropriate senior officers.

B. Staff briefings, including Housing Services and Services for Older People employees, will take place when there is something to discuss. This will ensure that employees are aware of how the strategy is being progressed. We will ensure:

- All briefings will allow time for discussion of issues;
- agendas will be circulated in advance;
- relevant Service Managers will always be present at briefings;
- a briefing note will be provided at each session; and
- staff who attend the briefings are required to feedback to members of their team who didn't attend.

C. Consultation will take place with the following, as the strategy is implemented for particular schemes:

- Cabinet Portfolio Holders
- Ward Councillors
- Relevant employees

D. Training and Development planning, where required, will enable employees affected by any changes to existing accommodation and support for older people, to perform effectively in their jobs.

External communication with The Gateshead Housing Company, other providers of accommodation and advocates for older people

Principles

Proposals in the strategy need to be complementary and provide a choice of accommodation for older people.

Where appropriate, partners should work together to deliver more choice.

As well as keeping council employees informed of issues and events regarding the provision of accommodation for older people and how it will impact upon them, senior officers of The Gateshead Housing Company, who will have responsibility for managing the Council's stock and arranging consultation with tenants, will also be informed so they can ensure their staff are aware of developments.

Method

A. The Housing Partnership Forum will discuss the delivery of the strategy. Separate work groups will be set up if necessary to progress specific aspects if required.

B. The Gateshead Housing Company has an interest and major role in the delivery of the strategy as it manages council housing for older people. The Council and The Gateshead Housing Company will discuss any proposals from either party for council schemes, before submission to Cabinet. The following process will therefore be followed to ensure that all implications of any proposals have been communicated between the Council and The Gateshead Housing Company:

Housing Services and Company officers agree proposals to be included in any Cabinet reports:

- proposals for implementing the Housing Strategy for Older People will need Cabinet approval to consult with residents;
- The Gateshead Housing Company will consult with residents at schemes and on an individual level then feed back results to Housing Services; and
- Group Director of Community Based Services report to Cabinet on outcomes of consultation and proposals for schemes.

Joint Management meetings will be held where appropriate between the council and The Gateshead Housing Company, to ensure progress is made on the Housing Strategy for Older People and to agree the best course of action for communicating its delivery.

Council staff briefings will include people working for The Gateshead Housing Company where relevant to ensure that they are aware of how the strategy is being progressed.

C. The Housing Corporation will be consulted on proposals for the implementation of the strategy.

D. Age Concern is involved in the delivery of the reprovision of residential accommodation in an advocacy role, talking to people living in homes facing closure about where they would like to move.

Good News and Public Relations

Principles

We will adhere to corporate guidelines in relation to the council's media policy.

We will use media wherever possible to promote the new developments under the strategy.

Method

A. Media - All external press activity will be handled through the Communications Service Media Team and where relevant The Gateshead Housing Company's communications officer. They will liaise with Housing Services to create an appropriate media strategy to inform residents about the council's plans for housing for older people.

B. To ensure that the Housing Strategy for Older People is seen in a positive light we will:

use *Council News* to run an article on the overall aim and objectives and how this will make a difference to older people; use *Council News* to publicise new services, project successes and developments; and promote its aims to the Forum for Older People and Age Concern.

Consultation

Principles

Involvement of older people and partner agencies is vital to ensure the effective delivery of the Housing Strategy for Older People.

All older people and their carers affected by the strategy should be able to comment on the information they receive and have a say in the execution of strategy.

We are mindful of the need to consider client confidentiality in issues relating to the sharing of information.

We are mindful of people's human right to privacy when showing older people being rehoused around other peoples' homes.

Method

Aim to talk to older people affected by the proposals coming out of the strategy to see how we can improve communication for later work. We will involve older people and partner agencies where possible/appropriate in the development of new homes.

Communications Action Plan

External			
Area	Actions	Lead	Timescale
Publicity	Ensure dissemination of news	Strategy Development Manager	As required
Consultation with BME communities	Translate Strategy on request	Strategy Development Manager	As required
People living in schemes being remodelled/ reprovided	Hold public meetings and individual discussions with people affected by any proposals Feedback responses to Housing Services	The Gateshead Housing Company	As needed during consultation on individual schemes
Internal			
Team meetings	Ensure Service Managers are aware of any reports to Cabinet on the implementation of the Housing Strategy for older People Service Managers to discuss above at relevant Team meetings	The Housing and Older Peoples' Heads of Service Service Managers (Housing & Older People)	When relevant
Staff briefings (including for The Gateshead Housing Company and Services for Older People)	Ensure system in place for briefings when there is something to report	Strategy Development Manager/ TGHC/ Service Managers (Housing & Older People)	As relevant
Consultation will take place with all relevant members of staff and councillors as the Housing Strategy for Older People is developed and implemented for particular schemes	As reports are being developed for particular schemes consult relevant ward councillors about the proposals. Set up meetings with groups/individual residents once Cabinet has given approval to consult on the future of their scheme	Strategy Development Manager	As relevant
Redeployment	Develop a strategy to look at alternatives for any employees affected by the Housing Strategy for Older People, to include consultation with the trade unions		As required

Internal continued

Area	Actions	Lead	Timescale
Housing Partnership Forum	Provide updates on Strategy delivery	Strategy Development Manager	Annually
Council - Strategic Level	Involve key agencies/organisations in the implementation of the Housing Strategy for Older People eg. Gateshead Forum for Older People, Age Concern, Help the Aged; invitation offering opportunity for further discussion	Strategy Development Manager	As required
Housing Corporation	Involve the Housing Corporation in discussions regarding the development of new provision using resources from the National Approved Housing Program	Housing Strategy Team	During bidding rounds and at regular intervals to give updates
Age Concern	Involve Age concern as advocates of older people when consulting on the future of schemes with residents	Strategy Development Manager/The Gateshead Housing Company	
Media	Increase use of good news stories Provide briefing notes to interviewees	The Gateshead Housing Company	As required
Improving image	Use Council News to: Run an articles on the Housing Strategy for Older People publicising new services and successes	The Gateshead Housing Company	On-going
Consultation	Work with Housing Associations, older people and their carers to give them a chance to influence the design of new housing schemes	Strategy Development Manager/Development & Enabling Officer	As new schemes develop

DIFFERENT FORMATS

If you would like this information in large print, Braille, on audiotape/CD or in a different language please contact the Housing Strategy Team on 0191 433 2632.

