

**AGEING WELL IN HUNTINGDONSHIRE –
OLDER PEOPLES’ HOUSING STRATEGY
(Report by the Head of Housing Services)**

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To consider the draft Older Peoples’ Housing Strategy titled ‘Ageing Well in Huntingdonshire: Housing and Healthy Ageing for Older People’.

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 2.1 Huntingdonshire has an ageing population. The 65+ age group in Huntingdonshire is due to increase by 59% (13,700 people) between 2007 and 2021 – higher than the county average (58%) and higher than the national average (33%)¹. People are living for longer and are getting frailer. Rates of dementia are on the increase. Half of people aged over 65 live alone and this increases in later age groups. The ratio of people aged 65+ to those aged 0-64 is due to increase. This presents challenges for future workforce planning as there will be less people of employment age available to care for, and pay the taxes to support the ageing population. This is a sector that already struggles to recruit and retain staff.
- 2.2 This demographic profile has long-term planning and resource implications for the Council, in its role as the strategic and enabling housing authority, and the Primary Care Trust (PCT) in their provision of health and social care services. A joint strategy has been prepared that examines the issues and sets out the housing and related services that Huntingdonshire District Council and partners can deliver to support NHS Cambridgeshire in promoting healthy ageing and improving the quality of life for older people.
- 2.3 The draft Strategy has been the subject of extensive consultation with partners. A copy was placed on the front of the Council’s web site and press releases were issued to alert the public to the opportunity to contribute to the strategy process. A double-page article featured in the local paper, the Hunts Post on 12 August 2009. The consultation was open for 12 weeks in line with the Compact Agreement for working with Voluntary Organisations in Cambridgeshire. A questionnaire asking for people’s feedback and views on specific areas of the strategy was sent out with a pre-paid reply envelope to encourage feedback. 37 questionnaires were

¹ Cambridgeshire County Council Research Group website
<http://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/community/population/population/Researchgrouppopulationestimates.htm>

received by post. A further 5 responses were received via the web site; 1 phone call; and a further 3 written responses were received (no questionnaire).

- 98% of respondents agreed that the priorities set out in this document are the correct ones.
- 92% agreed that extra care should take priority over the development of sheltered housing.
- 94% of respondents think that extra care should be focussed on the larger settlements.
- 89% of respondents agreed that extra care should include a % of leasehold to enable home ownership.
- 95% of respondents thought that this document is either acceptable, good or excellent.

3. IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 There is an action plan at the end of the Strategy. Some of the actions are straight forward, others will have their own SMART action plan.
- 3.2 Most of the actions can be funded by existing resources. Any actions which require a new funding commitment will be subject to separate bids. Approval of the action plan does not commit the Council to identifying new resources for implementation.

4. CONCLUSIONS

- 4.1 The ageing population provides the Council, the PCT and partners with future challenges. The Strategy sets out the key issues that need to be addressed.

5. RECOMMENDATION

- 5.1 It is recommended that Cabinet:
- a) approve the Strategy and action plan

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- Putting people first, transforming social care, making a strategic shift towards prevention and early intervention, key messages for decision makers (DoH, October 2008)
- Living well with dementia: a national dementia strategy (DoH, Feb 2009)
- Homes for the future: more affordable, more sustainable (DCLG, July 2007)
- The White Paper, Our health, our care, our say,(DoH, Jan 2006) High quality care for all: NHS next stage review final report (Darzi review of NHS, DoH, 2008)

- Lifetime homes, lifetime neighbourhoods: a national strategy for housing in an ageing society (joint publication from DCLG; DoH; and DWP 25 Feb 2008).

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