



Policy and Resources Committee – 9 October 2017

Study of housing and support needs of older people across Northamptonshire

Purpose of report

To inform Members on the findings and recommendations of a study undertaken into the housing and support needs of older people by all the local authorities and clinical commissioning groups in Northamptonshire and seek to endorse the general findings and principles of the study with a view to publishing the report on the Council's website.

Attachment

https://www.east-northamptonshire.gov.uk/meetings/meeting/801/policy_and_resources_committee

1.0 Background

1.1 The consultants Three Dragons and Associates were commissioned earlier this year by a consortium of the local authorities and clinical commissioning groups (CCGs) in Northamptonshire, to carry out a study into the Housing and Support Needs of Older People across Northamptonshire. The report is titled *Study of housing and support needs of older people across Northamptonshire*, and has 3 key aims to:

- Provide a robust evidence base which addresses demand and supply, affordability, tenure and type of housing/care across the County.
- Highlight emerging models of provision
- Engage with stakeholders to inform and ensure provision of a range of housing and care options across Northamptonshire.

1.2 The study findings were reported to the Housing Policy Working Party at its meeting on 13th September 2017. The study supplements the Northamptonshire County Council (NCC) Older Persons Accommodation Strategy and is intended to form part of the evidence base for emerging Part II Local Plans in both North and West Northamptonshire and to inform housing strategy of the future needs of older people across Northamptonshire.

1.3 The Housing White Paper places increased emphasis on assessing the needs of older people and indicates that there will be guidance published on how local development documents should meet the housing needs of older and disabled people, including supporting the development of such homes near local services.

2.0 The report findings

2.1 The majority of older people do not live in specialist accommodation. However, the report identifies a number of different types of accommodation providing specifically for older people. These accommodation options can be expressed as follows:

2.2 **Age restricted / Age exclusive housing:**

Housing to rent or purchase which is self contained with no additional facilities or services but is restricted to people above a specified age. It will comply with accessibility standards.

2.3 Specialist housing

- **Retirement housing** – provides some additional facilities such as shared entrance, residents lounge, access to an emergency alarm. Access to additional support to maintain independence can be purchased. There may be a scheme manager on site. The level of service varies from provider to provider
- **Supported Housing** – provides a greater range of facilities than retirement housing and with support and care services available. Facilities include a restaurant and staff on site 24 hours a day. Often known as Extra Care or Assisted Living.
- **Retirement Villages** – larger scale - clusters of accommodation with a central hub providing a range of facilities including shops, café, gym, pool etc. to create a village atmosphere and these facilities can sometimes be used by non residents. People can age in place and do not need to move again.

2.4 Residential / Nursing Homes

Establishments that provide accommodation, care and / or nursing for people whose care or health needs mean they cannot live independently. Residents have a bedroom rather than a self contained flat.

2.5 Key Indicators for East Northamptonshire District:

The following trends were revealed through the findings of the study:

2.6 Tenure

A very high percentage of older people are homeowners as can be seen in the table below. It can be assumed that many of these homeowners can afford to buy another property if they wish to move, provided that a range of suitable property types are available and at a price that is affordable.

| ENC owner occupiers by age band | | | | |
|---------------------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Age Band | 50-64 | 65-74 | 75-84 | 85+ |
| % owned | 80.6% | 80.9% | 76.5% | 64.6% |

2.7 Existing Supply of Specialist Retirement Housing

The majority (90%) of the existing specialist retirement housing in the district are provided through the affordable rented sector, with a relatively low provision for sale. To remedy this imbalance the private sector will need to be encouraged to develop more housing options for older homeowners.

| Retirement housing provision in ENC | |
|-------------------------------------|--------------|
| Type | No of Units |
| Sheltered Rent | 931 |
| Sheltered Sale | 29 |
| Extra Care Rent | 41 |
| Extra Care Sale | 69 |
| Total | 1,070 |

2.8 Demand Indicators for Housing for Older Persons

2.9 For age restricted/age exclusive housing for older people the following provision is reported:

Private Housing

As indicated in the report, specialised accommodation does not provide for the needs of older people in Northamptonshire. Many older people however may just wish to down size and free themselves of the responsibility of maintaining a property and a garden. Consequently, there is a considerable demand for non-specialised smaller housing units for older people, such as bungalows and apartments.

Affordable Housing

There is no additional demand for rented accommodation for older persons. However, the existing social rented stock is of poor quality compared with modern standards and there is therefore a need to modernise or replace the existing outdated social rented stock, some of which has high tenancy turnover and void rates. Continued provision of good quality accommodation for older persons should be made to facilitate downsizing and reduce under occupation of affordable family accommodation.

- 2.10 To provide for future housing need the study identifies target figures for specialist housing provision. In East Northamptonshire the potential annual target for specialist housing equates to:

- **70 units per anum** for outright sale and
- **33 units per anum** for shared ownership / shared equity

This target of 103 units per anum is arrived at using the Retirement Housing Group (RHG) model which assumes that 2.5% of people aged 65-74 and 15% of households aged 75 and over would live in specialised retirement housing if it was available in their area and in their chosen tenure.

2.11 Demand for Dementia Care Housing

The table below shows the prevalence of dementia in this District (2013) and the prediction for 2025, showing a 40% increase during the period.

| Number of people with dementia 2013 and 2025 (source Alzheimer's Society) | | | |
|--|-------------|-------------|-----------------|
| Local authority | 2013 | 2025 | Increase |
| East Northamptonshire | 1182 | 1655 | 40% |

- 2.12 Although specialist retirement housing can provide a supportive environment for people with early or mid-stage dementia (and for their partners) it is not well suited to catering for people with severe dementia. Most people with late stage dementia are currently accommodated in care homes. More than half (56%) of all care home beds are currently occupied by people with dementia and memory problems. Potential demand for care home beds could be reduced and quality of life improved by the provision of specialist housing schemes for people with dementia. Recent years have therefore seen the growth of specialist dementia care housing schemes. These offer a safe supportive environment and specialist activities for people with dementia.

2.13 Demand for Care Home Places

Nationally the proportion of people over 65 living in a care home is falling. By 2031 it is anticipated that 2.9% of people over the age of 65 will be living in a care home in the County. However, even with decreasing numbers going into care homes it is anticipated that there will be a shortfall of **909** care home places across the County by 2030, and 291 in East Northamptonshire.

2.14 Other considerations

2.15 Sustainable Urban Extensions and Garden Villages

SUEs, at least in the early stages of development, have not historically been places which are popular with either old people or with specialist retirement housing providers. The absence of local facilities and good public transport discourage potential older residents. However, SUEs do have an important role to play in securing retirement housing provision in the longer term and key sites adjacent to local centres could be reserved for development of older persons housing.

- 2.16 Larger schemes which create their own community such as Retirement Villages can establish their own older person friendly environment within a SUE or Garden Village and these types of developments could come forward earlier in the development process.

2.17 Care homes can be located in SUEs and Garden Villages at an earlier stage than retirement housing, since they are less dependent on local facilities. There will however need to be access to a regular bus service so that carers can get to work and friends and family can visit residents.

2.18 **Urban capacity/ Residual requirement**

As a result of the limited role of SUE's in meeting older persons housing need in the short term, it is appropriate to look at other locations with better access to local facilities where specialist housing could be provided. East Northamptonshire has scope to identify or promote allocated urban sites for older persons housing, with 'Residual Requirement' urban capacity for 621 units in Rushden and 193 in Oundle.

2.19 **Rural Areas**

Many of East Northamptonshire's villages already have social rented retirement housing, often in the form of bungalows and these have proved popular particularly with the "young old" but there may be problems as people age and become frailer. Care providers have expressed concerns about the cost of sending carers to village locations where the journey time is relatively long and there may be only one or two care recipients

2.20 "Hub and spoke" models seek to address this issue by siting a care facility (including supported housing) in a village location and then employing care workers who provide care to residents in the central "hub" facility and who also provide care to older residents in the same village and in other villages nearby. This model would help address the needs of older residents in East Northamptonshire's villages. It is important that the hub is sited in a location which is served by public transport.

2.21 **Neighbourhood plans**

There is emerging evidence to show that Neighbourhood Plans may be more willing to accept retirement housing than they are to accept general needs housing and that this can increase overall housing provision within the district. Neighbourhood Plans may look to provide specialist accommodation in areas not typically considered suitable or identified for development. Examples might be locations in main urban areas (potentially forming part of allowances for 'Urban Capacity') or where opportunities for specialist accommodation are on previously developed land or seek alternative uses for existing sites e.g. former pub, healthcare and employment sites.

2.22 **Affordability**

Analysis of the price of new build retirement housing suggests that it is rarely priced at less than the value of second-hand semi-detached property so owners of terraced or flatted properties are unlikely to be able to buy new, although they will usually be able to afford a second-hand retirement property. Shared ownership models would assist with the affordability gap for many older people.

3.0 **Conclusions and Recommendations**

3.1 The report makes a series of conclusions and recommendations (P48 to P57 of the report) the implications of which are summarised as follows:

3.2 **Planning Implications**

Local Plans should provide a clear steer to the development industry about the local authority's ambitions with regard to provision of retirement housing, dementia housing and care homes. Local authorities should:

- set clear targets in Local Plans setting out by type and tenure objectives for provision of specialist accommodation for older people. Specifically for East Northamptonshire
 - 70 homes for outright sale and 33 for shared ownership per annum

- 291 care home beds by 2031
- One specialist dementia care housing scheme in the next 3-5 years
- ensure that policy targets are monitored and this information is set out in Authority Monitoring Reports
- better define retirement housing in policies strategies, guidance and commissioning documents to clearly explain the outcomes for residents, types of buildings, services and tenure sought
- support and direct proposals for specialist accommodation and set standards through the adoption of Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD) and checklists for developers including the key features to be provided in new schemes
- encourage a wider range of providers to operate in the county, including providers of dementia care housing
- draw the evidence in this report to the attention of those parishes currently preparing Neighbourhood Plans and should liaise with the Planning Advisory Service and National Association of Local Councils to monitor good practice in the use of Neighbourhood Plans to promote provision of retirement housing
- require SUEs and Garden Villages to include a proportion of older persons housing in Masterplans, Development Briefs and S106 agreements, to be delivered at a time when local facilities and transport connections are in place.
- retirement villages and care homes could be developed earlier in the development process subject to transport (e.g. minibus) being available for carers, residents and their family and friends
- encourage provision of retirement housing in urban areas in addition to what is expected to come through on allocated sites. Such steps should include:
 - support for windfall sites which come forward for retirement housing and care homes from other uses
 - allocation of employment and retail sites for housing usage, specifying that they must include or be provided solely for retirement housing and care homes
 - undertake a review of public sector land holdings to identify sites which could be marketed for retirement housing provision or care homes
 - the preparation of the Brownfield Register should incorporate criteria that assess the suitability of identified sites to make provision for retirement housing
 - any such encouragement of retirement housing provision and care homes should be subject to the proviso that retirement housing sites have good access to local facilities and public transport routes and that care home sites have good access to transport routes.
 - identify the scale of potential demand for retirement housing from existing residents in rural areas and aim to provide a steer on the split between urban and rural demand in the Part 2 Local Plans.
 - explore how Hub and Spoke models could work in Northamptonshire
- bring the evidence in the report to the attention of parishes preparing Neighbourhood Plans and monitor good practice in the use of Neighbourhood Plans to promote provision of retirement housing

- set affordable housing targets for older persons housing which reflect the need for affordable housing for older people rather than the general needs affordable housing target. This would focus affordable housing provision on shared ownership rather than on social rent and would accord well with the 10% affordable home ownership requirement in the Housing White Paper.
- set out the current commitments and recent completions for retirement housing and / or care homes and identify which of these are considered to contribute towards development plan housing requirements, clearly defining what is Use Class C3 (housing) and C2 (residential care)
- if CIL is to be considered in North Northamptonshire, a specific appraisal of the viability of retirement housing compared with general needs housing should be undertaken and consideration be given to setting separate CIL rates
- S106 requirements for infrastructure should be appropriate to the service required by the residents (e.g. not education)
- car parking requirements should reflect lower levels of car ownership and traffic generation but also local transport availability.

3.3 Housing Implications

Working with the affordable housing sector:

- There is limited demand for additional provision of retirement housing for rent. However it is important that the rented stock continues to be of a high standard and to meet modern standards as they evolve (eg with more use of mobility scooters and more widespread access to IT and the internet). The District and Borough Councils should take active steps to improve their understanding of demand for and supply of affordable retirement housing and should:
 - improve record keeping and encourage RP partners to do the same, where possible maintaining records in a consistent format to assist monitoring
 - initiate more in-depth investigation of reasons for low demand to inform future asset management decisions
 - seek to set common minimum standards for affordable rented retirement housing with a view to encouraging remodelling or withdrawal of schemes which either fall short of specified standards or suffer from persistent low demand

If a persistent, local issue is identified regarding long term empty private leasehold properties offered for sale at lower values, look into the possibility of the local authority or RPs purchasing the properties for use as private rented or shared ownership accommodation.

3.4 ***Working with the sale housing sector:***

Local authority housing teams should take the lead in engaging with private developers and RPs aiming to

- Obtain a better understanding of the range of products available
- identify a range of organisations who wish to be active partners in working in Northamptonshire to create a specialised housing development pipeline to deliver the required types and tenures.

3.5 **Northamptonshire County Council (NCC) and local housing teams**

- ### 3.6
- NCC and the seven district councils should seek to develop a single, agreed approach to the use of supported housing top up funding allocated to local authorities following the introduction of the LHA cap.
 - engage with existing partners and specialist providers to explore the appetite for

development to meet assessed need.

- NCC to brief local authority housing teams and Registered Providers on relevant aspects of care funding to support future decision-making on nominations, rents and service charges.
- Releasing/ developing on public land to take advantage of Government proposals to extend local authorities' flexibility to dispose of land at less than best consideration.
- explore the potential to develop a supported housing rental model linked to a scheme for older people to lease their family home to the local authority or an RP.

3.7 **Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs)**

Improve the monitoring of stranded patients and record more fully reasons why each individual cannot go home, following which there may be a case for commissioning further research into emerging best practice solutions to the problems identified.

3.8 **All public sector partners**

- 3.9
- County Council, CCGs and local authority planning and housing teams to work together to identify publicly owned sites which are in suitable locations for development.
 - seek to encourage provision of a range of dementia care options. Explore the feasibility of a partnership of the County Council, District/Borough Council partner, relevant CCG and a specialist Registered Provider of Social Housing (RP) to establish a Dementia Care model scheme.
 - engage with providers which have developed re-ablement and interim care services to develop fresh options for stranded patients.
 - consider the cost benefits of introducing downsizing incentives (including practical assistance with preparing to move) across all tenures.
 - consider developing options which support older people to move to rented specialist retirement accommodation while generating income from letting the home they own (and preserving a capital asset).
 - seek to encourage development of a private rented retirement housing market (either as standalone developments or as individual units within larger schemes).
 - draw up marketing documents which identify Northamptonshire as a location which welcomes retirement housing provision and seeks to ensure provision of a range of options for provision of care, including for dementia patients. Organise special events where specialist housing providers and care home operators can get to know the Councils and CCGs better.

Keep targets and achievements in provision of retirement housing and care homes under review and to collect and monitor information from retirement housing providers on the proportion of residents who receive regular domiciliary care and who would otherwise be in a care home.

3.10 **Local authorities and CCGs: working with consumers**

- 3.11
- Encourage providers to make information about retirement housing available on an easily comparable basis and to ensure that members of the public know where to go to access this information. Specifically
- ensure that members of the public can access up to date information about the range of housing and care options available.
 - set up a County wide database which lists all retirement housing and care schemes and sets out up to date information on services provided and costs to

residents.

Require developers to submit this information at the time they are granted planning permission. Monitoring officer to be funded by developer contributions.

4.0 Next Steps

4.1 NCC has been requested to co-ordinate a meeting between all the stakeholders to form an action plan to take the recommendations forward. Following on from this the Northamptonshire Chief Housing Officers Group will ask their Housing Strategy and Planning Officers will discuss addressing the issues raised in the report.

4.2 In light of the above it is suggested that the general principles of the study can be taken on board to allow officers to work up more detailed implications, understand better the local implications and inform future strategy.

5.0 Equality and Diversity Implications

5.1 Access to this type of specialist housing provision will have a positive impact on future accommodation opportunities for older persons, as well as providing options for longer term care provision.

6.0 Legal Implications

6.1 There are no immediate legal implications arising from the report.

7.0 Risk Management

7.1 The National Planning Policy Framework refers specifically to the needs of older people, and requires local planning authorities to plan for a mix of housing based on current and future demographic trends. Failure to provide a policy direction for the accommodation needs of older people is likely to result in fewer, if any proposals coming forward to meet demand. The recommendations contained in this report will help to provide for the formulation of future strategy.

8.0 Resource and Financial Implications

8.1 There is no direct resource or financial implications arising from this report. Future strategy and policy development is likely to have implications and will be reported as work progresses on, in particular, Local Plan policy and housing strategy.

9.0 Constitutional Implications

9.1 This report has no direct constitutional implications.

10.0 Customer Service Implications

10.1 The report will not have any identifiable implications in respect of impact on customers or customer service.

11.0 Corporate Outcomes

11.1

The Corporate Outcomes supported through the report are:

- Good Quality of Life – the formulation of future policy will assist in meeting older peoples housing needs
- Effective Partnership Working – the report will help to inform how the Council works with stakeholders to meet future older peoples housing requirements

12.0 Recommendations

12.1 The Committee is recommended to:

1. Endorse the key principles raised in the report and support the further work outlined in the “next steps” to allow officers to work up the detailed implications of the report in informing future strategy and policy formulation.
2. Publish the report on the Council’s website for evidence to support future strategy and policy formulation.

(Reason- to ensure the Council provides a sound evidence base in supporting policy and strategy development).

| | | | | | |
|---|-----------------------|-----------|--|-----------|--|
| Legal | Power: | | | | |
| | Other considerations: | | | | |
| Background Papers: Study of Housing and Support Needs of Older People Across Northamptonshire | | | | | |
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| CFO | | MO | | CX | |

