

A study of the Housing and Support needs of Older People in Herefordshire: Executive Summary

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Introduction

Herefordshire Council commissioned Peter Fletcher Associates and Arc4 to carry out a comprehensive survey of the housing and support needs of older people. Herefordshire Council wanted to understand the overall needs of older people in the administrative area and also wanted to understand any differences that existed between the local housing market areas of Herefordshire.

Behind the commission was awareness that there is a rapidly growing older population and commissioners needed to be able to plan for the changes that this will bring. This work included:

- Looking at all housing including owner occupation and all forms of renting as well as looking at other services that help people remain in their own, for example housing support, home improvement and adaptations.
- People over 50 so that the needs and attitudes of the next generations of older people could be understood

The work involved in developing this report included:

- Setting out the national policy context

- Understanding the local housing context, the current housing strategy and planning policies of the local authority, and existing evidence of housing supply and demand from older people
- Understanding the local supply of non-housing services to older people and how they impact on the needs and wants of older people where such evidence is available
- Making use of information already available, including reports, documents, research and strategies already in the public domain - see Appendix 1
- Undertaking primary research to inform the project as follows –
 - Consultation with older people
 - 50+ Household Survey
 - Two surveys of Sheltered Housing
 - Interviews with a range of stakeholders including housing and support providers
 - Interviews with a range of commissioners
- During the course of the work new information was gathered from 3,932 older people

National Policy Context

The key government drivers include:

- The Government's **Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR)** in October 2010 which set out significant reductions in public spending and removal of some regulation and ring fencing
- **The Localism Bill 2011** with a shift in decision making to the local area
- **Housing Benefit** policy to limit the level of housing benefit payable for different types of property
- **The Health and Social Care Bill 2011** which sets out the government's vision for the National Health Service with new commissioning arrangements and the creation of Health and Well-being Boards
- **The New Vision for Adult Social Care** which continues the drive to delivering choice and a personalised approach to social care
- **The National Strategy for Housing for an Ageing Society (2008) and the Housing Strategy for England (2011)** both of which highlight the importance of older people as a key driver in the housing market:
 - *"Some 60% of projected growth in households to 2033 will be aged 65+.*

- *Good housing for older people can reduce caring pressures on working families. It can also prevent costs to the National Health Service and social care providers.*
- *Attractive choices to move to smaller, more suitable homes can free up much-needed local family housing.*
- Recent national research from PSSRU that identifies that extra care is a cost effective option compared with residential care and delivers better outcomes at similar or lower costs, and that the development of extra care both improved choice and provided a means of encouraging downsizing

Local Policy Context

The local policy context highlights:

- The need to move away from bed based hospital and long-term care and towards an emphasis on services that promote prevention and re-ablement
- The need to diversify the housing market to meet the needs of an ageing population

About Herefordshire

The current population over 65 in Herefordshire is estimated to be about 38,800 according to Government statistics.

The older population is predicted to grow to 59,800 by 2025. More older people live in the rural areas as a proportion of the population (23%) than in the towns such as Hereford (20%) and the rural areas are some of the most sparsely populated in England.

As a result of these changes the profile of the population is set to age significantly with implications for housing, support, care and health:

- About 48% growth in people over 65 by 2025
- About 76.8% growth in people over 85 by 2025
- The older population will grow as a proportion of the total population from 22.2% in 2010 to 31% by 2025

The older population is projected to increase at a higher rate in Herefordshire than the England average. However, the growth in people aged 85 and over is most significant as this is the group who will most need specialist accommodation and support services. The proportion of older people from black and minority ethnic groups is less than 1%.

To understand what this growth means there is a need to look more closely at the changes it brings. Age in itself does not tell us a great deal.



An ageing population will bring a number of challenges. There will be a growth for example in the number of people with a dementia. It is expected that there will be a growth of 1,941 people suffering with dementia by 2025, an increase of 67.7%.

Older people are not a uniform group:

- There are noticeable differences in wealth and deprivation across communities and there are noticeable differences within neighbourhoods. This means that there will be differing levels of services and housing needed to match local needs
- There are at least three generations of older people who have very different life experiences and differing expectations
- Many older people will not require or want any help while the number of people who will need specialist help will increase
- About 72.8% are owner occupiers but this varies from 76.9% in Ross on Wye to 59.3% in Hereford City



What Older People had to say

Consumer research with older people shows that their aspirations in relation to housing and support in older age are changing. This is driven by higher levels of home ownership (and so equity and capital wealth), higher aspirations around lifestyle, and a wish to retain independence even if they have health and care needs. This is translating into a growing view that being frail does not necessarily mean giving up and going into a care home. Aspirations have been and are continuing to change at a rapid pace and will continue to do so via the baby boomer generation who expect more space, more bedrooms, more social life etc.

To find out if this was the view of older people in Herefordshire a household survey of older people aged 50+ was conducted.

This was supported by discussions with 5 groups of older people including a group of Gypsies and Travellers. Consultations took place across the county.

What the Survey said

- 67% of older people are under occupying their property living in 3 and 4 bedroom properties or larger and 65.9% live in houses
- 83% of older person households are satisfied with the state of repair of their home
- 7.3% of older people need help to maintain their property, examples included decorating and cleaning
- 72% people want to stay in their current home and most have lived in that home for some time.
- Most of those thinking about moving wanted to stay in the area they currently live
- 49.7% of those thinking about moving said that they wanted 2 bedroom accommodation and particularly bungalows
- 78.8% would consider buying a property outright/with a mortgage, 27% buying sheltered accommodation, 23.6% buying extra care housing and 20.4% renting from a housing association
- 21.6% wanted more advice and information on such topics as financial matters and looking after the home
- 89.4% said they could afford at least £100,000 and 49.7% could afford £200,000, to purchase a home

What older People said in the focus groups

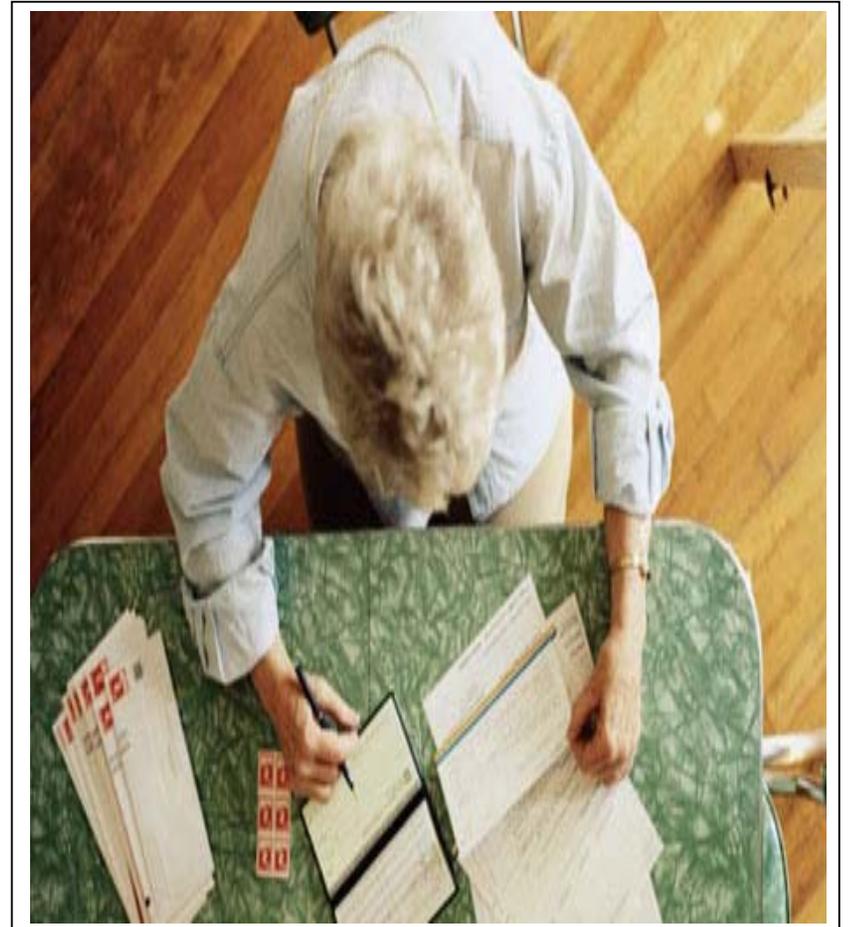
- Most people want to stay in their own home but about a quarter of those attending each session said they had been thinking about their future housing options
- There is a strong importance attached to domestic and maintenance services that help people to remain independent in their own homes
- People were generally prepared to pay for services that help them remain independent but concerns were expressed about how costly this can be
- Consistently people said they would turn to family and friends first if their health failed. Gypsies and Travellers also identified family as the key source of support
- The drivers for moving were balanced by the emotional attachment people had to their homes, the community spirit and most importantly the support of family and friends
- For older Gypsies and Travellers, the inappropriateness of living in caravans was noted, particularly the difficulties of heating a caravan was a major cause of concern.
- 2 bed bungalows are preferred but especially where there is very little alternative specialist housing for older people
- There were mixed views on renting in the future or purchasing, although there was a tendency for people who are owner-occupiers to prefer purchasing

- Few people knew about Extra Care and there was limited knowledge about other services
- Location is paramount when choosing future accommodation, including access to transport
- Access to good information was considered to be important



What do these results mean?

- Most older people like where they live and want access to services to stay there
- Adaptations to the home is an important feature of staying put and it will be a continuing need
- Information and advice about what is available needs to be provided through a range of mediums to older people across all tenures
- Support with domestic tasks figures prominently and there is a need for practical services to help maintain independence. Most older people say they are willing to pay for these services
- When asked where they would prefer to move to, most people generally wanted to stay in their local area
- There is a need for a range of housing options that include outright purchase and shared ownership



Housing in the future

An analysis was undertaken of what is currently available for older people and how this might be affected by changing needs. The following were considered:

- Information on ordinary housing including owner occupation and renting
- Information on Specialist accommodation for older people including a survey of property conditions in sheltered housing
- Information on house prices
- Assessment of future housing demand

General Needs Housing

The key priorities identified in relation to supply are:

- Older people will make up a third of all the people living in ordinary housing and housing and planning strategy needs to take that into account
- The development of 'all age' accessible two bedroom general needs housing, both rent and shared ownership to address the ageing population in the housing market
- Improving the overall standard and accessibility of housing and promoting Lifetime Homes standards to developers
- Growth is needed in the number of wheelchair/ adapted properties

- Consider the infrastructure that is needed to develop lifetime communities
- Older people, in particular home owners, want a wider housing choice
- Use the development of new high quality two and three bedroom accessible housing to promote downsizing and reduce under occupation
- Ensure that all new dwellings that requires access to properties above ground floor have lift access or are designed so that assisted access can be provided

Specialist housing

Overall there is:

- A good supply of general care home and care home with nursing places for older people given the planned shift away from long-term care home care
- A major under supply of specialist retirement housing for sale
- An oversupply of lower quality sheltered housing for rent that over time needs to be replaced with better quality accommodation
- An under supply of housing based provision for people with dementia or a learning disability
- A shortfall in the planned provision of enhanced sheltered and extra care housing across all tenures to meet projected need
- A significant change in the way new developments will need to be funded, which will have a major influence on developing future provision

There is a need for:

- A much more diversified housing market that provides a range of housing choices for older people:
 - More ordinary 2 bedroom properties to purchase that are attractive to older people who are under-occupying
 - Bungalows are important but other forms of housing will also play an important part
 - The planning for general housing should take account of the high numbers of older people who currently live in ordinary housing and want to remain in ordinary housing
- Mixed tenure Extra Care housing should be an important element of future development
- More specialist housing provision for people with a dementia and learning disabilities should be made available within existing developments and new developments
- Better use to be made of some existing provision and particularly sheltered accommodation to support higher levels of frailty
- The quality of sheltered housing for rent needs to be addressed to meet the growing aspirations of older people
- A growth in the level of sheltered housing for sale and shared ownership

Overall there will need to be a long term change in the balance of specialist provision towards owner occupation



Community and Independence

A very important part of the research was to understand how older people would be supported in the community in the future. The following issues were considered

- The changing role of Adult Social Services, Health and Support both in terms of the introduction of Personal Budgets and the implication of changes in public sector funding
- The role different types of specialist housing can play in helping people remain independent
- What help is needed for older people living in ordinary housing
- The role information can play in helping people make the right choices

Shared outcomes

A key element that is emerging from the changed policy agenda is the need for shared outcomes. There is a need to:

- Address the needs and growing aspirations of the older population as a whole across all income and tenure groups
- Identify shared outcomes across health, social care, housing support and regeneration, and look at how they could be delivered
- Address the key national drivers
- Link up universal and specialist services

Housing providers have a strong track record in finding individual solutions that fit around people but personalisation means further shifting the balance of control in decision making – this includes decisions over budgets, assessment and support or care packages. It challenges existing services and the size and shape of many existing organisations.

Also Supporting People grant which funded support services such as sheltered housing support and community alarms is no longer a ring fenced grant and has now been merged into the Formula Grant which includes funding for the majority of Local Authority functions. Local Authorities are expected to substantially reduce budgets year on year. The result is that these changes are driving a reassessment of the way services are being delivered in Herefordshire and elsewhere.

The changes will see older people having greater choice and control in determining what services they want and need. Service providers will have to develop more flexible services to meet individual needs rather than offer a standard service for all. The responsibilities of commissioners are also changing towards market shaping to ensure that a range of service choices are available.



Gaps:

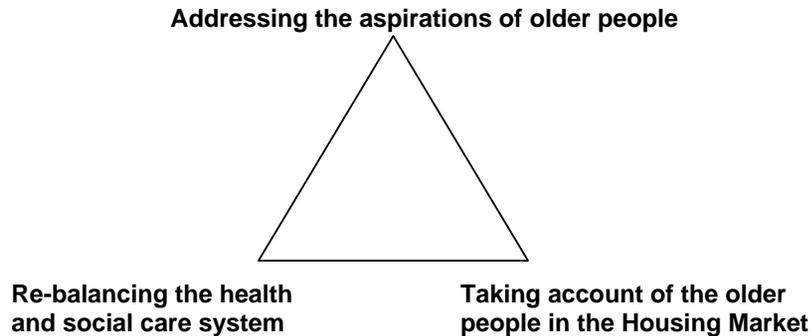
- The shift to Personal Budgets and more people self funding support will present the challenge of offering cost effective and efficient services that older people are prepared to purchase
- A major cultural change is needed to shift the balance of provision and services away from long-term bed based care
- Information and access: there is a gap in information and advice relating to income maximisation and benefits advice. There is also a gap in advice on housing options
- Dependency levels of residents in sheltered housing are relatively low. There needs to be an evaluation of the role that some sheltered housing can play in supporting higher levels of need, if the design is suitable, within the context of the current floating support model of housing support
- The way that community alarms are delivered is also likely to change. Advances in technology along with increasing numbers of self funders present a challenge to providers to offer modern and relevant services. The use of assistive technology will continue to grow both as part of reablement packages and as a more efficient way of delivering some forms of care and support.
- The new neighbourhood model of housing support needs to link in to the potential of using extra care and some sheltered housing as a hub and spoke support model for older people in the local area – a virtual extra care approach

- The recommissioning of the HIA/Handyperson services provides an opportunity to build a more integrated service that can meet future expectations
- The specialist needs of older people with dementia, learning disability and other needs in housing settings needs to be addressed
- A proactive market development approach is needed if Herefordshire Council is to be able to meet the housing and service gaps in the current economic and funding environment. This means developing a programme approach and creating the policy and planning environment (for example specific planning policies relating to housing for older people) that will encourage developers with financial backing to wish to invest in Herefordshire as an area for specialist housing development



How should we move forward?

The report sets out a series of recommendations to address the following drivers:



Recommendation 1: Information and access

There is a need for Herefordshire Council to working actively with social housing providers, housing support staff and other voluntary sector providers of information and advice to:

- Promote benefit take-up and information to older people across all income groups about housing, services and financial products
- Promote the use across the County by housing, care and health staff of the national FirstStop housing advice and information service. It is a free resource for older people, their relatives and professionals
- Consider the potential of housing involvement in a First Contact type signposting service

Recommendation 2: Redevelop the general needs housing market

- Recognising the level of home ownership (nearly 80%) and equity in the older people's market, as shown in the 50+ household survey carried out for this study, and the potential to use new housing developments suitable for older people as a driver to rebalance the housing market

- Developing non-specialist general needs two and three bedroom houses, flats and bungalows for rent and sale that meet lifetime homes standards, across all areas of the county in line with the LHMA and the Local Housing Requirements Study. These will be of equal benefit to older people, people or families with disabilities and young families
- Encouraging mixed developments to balance the market, meet the needs of older people and create genuine lifetime communities
- Market the new housing opportunities to older people across all tenures to encourage people who are under occupying to free up family housing through the development of housing for older people
- Consider the development of a charged for 'Home Moving' service to support older people who might wish to move but who are daunted by the practicalities of moving
- Consider the needs of older people within development briefs for Section 106 commitments and the provision of other forms of cross subsidy
- Ensure that new flats in particular are "future proofed" to take account of the changing population. For example, examine the potential to enhance standards by ensuring that all new flatted blocks have, as a minimum, stairwells that are capable of being adapted to take a stair lift



Recommendation 3: Sheltered Housing for rent and sale

Herefordshire Council should:

- Work with social housing providers to manage down to a smaller provision of higher quality sheltered for rent sector, with decommissioning, upgrading or change over time of sub standard schemes. The supply model in Figure 4.24 in section 4 of the main report suggests a significant decrease in the supply need for sheltered housing for rent (by 617 units) to 2015, but a small increase in supply of 19 units (from the 2010 figure) by 2025 to reflect the projected growth in the older population. It is not seen as appropriate in this report to identify a particular target. Rather it is proposed that decisions are taken on a scheme by scheme basis in relation to:
 - Location and demand in the local market
 - The quality and accessibility of individual schemes for older people
- Work with the sheltered accommodation providers to define minimum accommodation standards for the future and to agree an overall decommissioning plan for sub standard sheltered housing for rent.
- Support the development of a small amount of new affordable sheltered housing for rent or shared ownership to improve the overall quality of the stock, and to aid the functioning of the wider housing markets and to release much needed family housing. This is likely to be in the order of around 100 units
- Work with private developers to promote the development of additional leasehold/outright purchase retirement housing to address the current high level of under supply

The model in Figure 4.24 of the main report indicates the need for an additional 2105 units by 2015 reaching to an additional 3377 units by 2025. These are unrealistic targets in the light of the current housing market and therefore should be treated as an indication of the need to develop more specialist accommodation for sale as market conditions improve. However, it is important to stress that leasehold retirement housing for older people is still being built even in the current economic climate and developers are looking to work with local authorities who want to see further development of older people's housing.



Recommendation 4: Future role of sheltered housing

In relation to services in sheltered housing the shift by the Council to floating support that is not linked to accommodation based services means that there is a need for sheltered housing providers to:

- Re-think the future role of sheltered housing, based on a floating support model, or other self funding service model

- Assess the potential of some sheltered housing to shift to an extra care/very sheltered housing model
- Consider the potential of sheltered housing playing a wider community role

Recommendation 5: Enhanced sheltered housing and extra care

Herefordshire Council and its health partners need to proactively address the shortfall in provision of enhanced sheltered housing and extra care housing as part of the strategy to reduce the reliance on hospital bed based care and long-term residential and nursing home care. There is a need to:

- Promote the development of more enhanced sheltered housing for sale such as Assisted Living (see section 5.9 and Appendix 9) that supports higher levels of need. The model in Figure 4.24 suggests 436 units by 2015 and 648 units by 2025 split equally between rent and sale. This target is unrealistic in the present economic climate, but it is recommended that the County Council works proactively with selected private developers to pilot at least three Assisted Living schemes in the short term in different parts of the county
- Address the shortfall in the provision of extra care housing set out in Figure 4.24 in section 4 – an additional 838 units (one third for rent and two thirds for sale) by 2015; reaching to an additional 1315 units (one third for rent and two thirds for sale) by 2025 compared with the current supply figure. In light of the reductions in public funding and the current housing market, these are challenging targets. However, it should be noted that other authorities still have ambitious extra care programmes (for example North Yorkshire are

seeking to develop a further 30 schemes – 1200 units – by 2012 on top of the 14 schemes they already have). It is suggested that Herefordshire should set a target of 300 units of new extra care in the next 5 years, mainly for sale. In section 5.9 of the main report a number of mainly self funding models of extra care have been illustrated

- Explore the feasibility of developing a 'virtual extra care at home' model that does not rely on an extra care building – see Recommendation 9
- Proactively seek partners to develop extra care for sale and mixed tenure
- Develop a model specification for extra care that will aid developers as they consider the option to develop in Herefordshire
- Set specific targets for the care management service to divert older people from residential care to extra care as new extra care schemes come on stream. Given the current high level of hospital and long-term bed based care it is suggested that the minimum diversion target should be 20%
- Develop the capacity and skills of staff to enable extra care housing schemes to support a range of needs in relation to older people and adults: people with dementia; people with disabilities living into older age (for example, people with learning disabilities); BME people living into older age; and using two bedroom units to enable partners/relatives to continue to provide a carer role



Recommendation 6: Telecare

- Look at how telecare services can be further developed and financed in the future, and focus in particular on the development of a charging policy
- Work with housing providers to assess whether their community alarm systems in their specialist housing are 'fit for purpose' and compatible with telecare equipment



Recommendation 7: Floating housing support linked to neighbourhoods

- Further develop floating support services within the context of the evolution of personalisation, new types of worker such as Personal Assistants, and the development of the County's Neighbourhood approach

Recommendation 8: Addressing social isolation

- Examine the potential to develop self-financing volunteer befriending schemes to address social isolation, which would go alongside the Village Warden service that the County is developing

Recommendation 9: Virtual extra care

- Test out the potential through a pilot in one part of the County, of linking housing support services such as community alarm services, telecare, and floating support to a broader service approach linked with health and social care through hub and spoke and 'virtual' extra care models. The hub could be provided through existing extra care or selected sheltered housing schemes
- Consider the potential for the new GP commissioning groups to fund some elements of low level support as part of a 'virtual' extra care approach. Such funding could be focused on delivering community health targets such as falls prevention and exercise

Recommendation 10: Home Improvement Agency

Herefordshire Council needs to take the lead to:

- Develop and improve information about HIA related services. As part of the new service, information about options and choices will be a critical issue. In particular there will be a continuing issue about the choice to stay put or move
- Develop shared training/liaison for all staff. This would include cross agency approaches to common cases/scenarios. This could be linked to the development of a First Contact type service (see Recommendation 1)
- Develop clear referral mechanisms between organisations
- Address specific operational issues such as delays in OT assessments and the consequent underuse of the DFG budget
- Link HIA services with the broader network of agencies in order to better support older/vulnerable people
- Develop increased capacity for handyperson services, and if appropriate explore new development vehicles such as social enterprise models to achieve this
- Use the HIA to pilot the use of the FirstStop Housing Options for Older People (HOOP) tool to encourage older people to think through the options and respective benefits of staying put or moving home

Recommendation 11: People with dementia

There is a need to develop new housing based models for people with dementia and examples have been provided in section 5.8 and Appendix 9. The model in Figure 4.24 suggests 128 units are needed by 2015. This may be an unrealistic target to set but it does indicate the direction of travel. It is recommended that:

- The Council looks to pilot a minimum of two housing based models for people with dementia, in partnership with: an existing care or nursing home provider using a close care model; and with a supported housing provider through an extra care type model
- The Council looks to develop the 'virtual' extra care model for people with dementia to support them in their own homes through community alarm, telecare and housing support, alongside the development of specialist domiciliary care, which has also been identified as a gap that needs to be addressed

Recommendation 12: People with a learning disability

- Take a proactive approach to using existing specialist housing for older people for older people with a learning disability, including sheltered and extra care housing
- Work with providers to develop shared housing models using accessible accommodation such as bungalows or ex warden flats in sheltered housing

Recommendation 13: Making it Happen

For Herefordshire Council to deliver the changes identifies in these recommendations it will need to take action to:

- Change the current culture of bed based care

- Adopt a market approach to development. This should include a programme approach using a framework agreement with selected providers and a clear development plan that is predicated on:
 - A cross tenure approach to take account of the whole market
 - Provision of free or subsidised sites by the local authority
 - An assumption that the sale of leasehold units can subsidise the affordable (rent and shared ownership) units
 - An assumption that only a very limited amount of Social Housing Grant will be available to underpin the programme
 - A very proactive approach to both social and private sector providers to make it happen, underpinned by creating project management capacity within the local authority to drive the programme and an enabling approach with development partners
 - Specific planning policies, either in the Core Strategy or through Supplementary Planning Documents (see Appendix 10), that highlight the importance of older people in the housing market in Herefordshire
 - A planning framework that will ensure that sites are available, some of which are earmarked for housing for older people, to ensure developers can compete with general needs housing developers
 - An explicit shift away from local authority placements in residential care
- Secure support from the economic development side of the County Council to enable new providers to emerge in the market place with new legal vehicles such as social enterprises