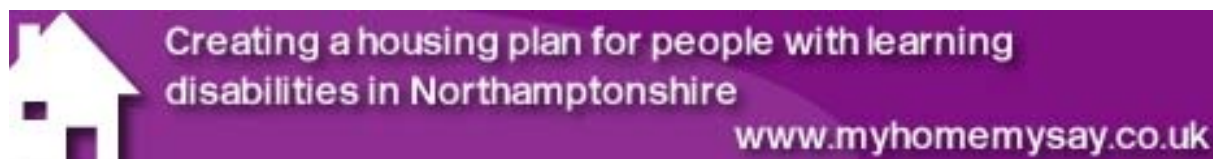


## **NORTHANTS LEARNING DISABILITY** **PARTNERSHIP BOARD**



Date:- 16<sup>th</sup> July 2010

### **HOW PEOPLE ARE HELPED TO FIND HOUSING ISSUES & OBSERVATIONS – (Version 2)**

#### **How People Presently Live.....**

1. In 2009 -10, 1571 people with a learning disability were known to Social Services & of these we knew how 1298 people lived
2. Of the 1298 people 36% (467) were living in residential care, 25% (320) at home with their families & 1% (13) in nursing homes.
3. 21% (274) were renting, either privately or in Social Housing (120 & 154 respectively).
4. Only 1% (16) were home owners, 2% (15) were living in Sheltered housing & 15% (188) were living in some form of supported living

#### **Where People Go for Help....**

5. People seem very confused about who to approach for help with housing
6. There appear to be two different systems operating - some people go to the District/Borough councils, where as those who receive help via Social Services initially approach Care Management teams
7. The different roles Social Care & District /Borough housing staff play in helping with their housing desires is unclear
8. When Social Services are approached housing advice is often sort as a secondary need with care/support being the main concern
9. Its unclear how much help with housing people & their supporters get from personal support & advocacy agencies

10. Some people don't seem to understand how involved the process of considering & changing where people live really can be.
11. Often people seem to be looking for a housing solution in a hurry and don't appreciate that it can take quite a long time to work out what people want & then to unravel how organisations can help

### **Approaching District or Borough Councils for help.....**

12. It appears that few people have registered with District/Borough Council's to access social housing & few Councils' seem to record information about the housing needs of people with a learning disability.
13. Where people have approached District/Borough Council some concerns have been raised about their experiences, such as:-
  - a. Staff often don't understand or have the skills to be able to communicate with the a person with a Learning Disability
  - b. Customers find it hard to communicate their desires
  - c. More time to advise customers & their supporters needs to be allowed
  - d. Forms & processes are often in a format which many people with a learning disability can't read or understand
  - e. Housing allocations processes can be confusing for people with LD & their supporters (Choice Based Lettings systems)
  - f. Where people have been housed, some concerns have been expressed about the need to house people sensitively, as there are examples of people experiencing bullying or neighbour problems where they were placed

### **What Options are Available to People.....**

14. Often people are unaware that they have a 'right' to choose where & how they live & to consider this regularly
15. Many people seem unaware of the various housing options available to them or where to go to get help
16. People who have lived in one way for many years often have no concept of living differently & it appears few opportunities exist to

help people expand their 'world view' & to 'try out' other ways of living.

17. It appears both local Councils' & Adult Social Services explore a limited range of housing options with customers.
18. Examples of home ownership for people with Learning Disability are rare, there are a few instances of people choosing shared ownership & which appears to have worked reasonably well. However, cuts in Government expenditure may make this more difficult in future

### **Helping People to Explore their Housing Needs & Desires.....**

19. There appears to be limited opportunities for people to regularly explore how & where they are living.
20. Where some people have expressed a desire to live differently the practical help to make this happen has often not been available, leaving people living in the same home many years later.

### **Support to Live Independently.....**

21. Some families or supporters have reported feeling baffled about how they can help their child/sibling move to an independent living option. The things which often confuse them include:-
  - a. Getting help to understand the many options, their cost & if their loved one can afford to live independently
  - b. Understanding rules & regulations such as related to renting or owning a home
  - c. Helping their loved one register on waiting lists, find a property or working out how to apply
  - d. Understanding how to access housing benefit & assess if it will be enough to cover rental costs before taking on a tenancy
  - e. Identifying the support or care available to help people in their own home, from whom, how to access it & what it costs
  - f. How can they ensure the safety of their loved one, both in the home & personal safety in the community

- g. If in social housing are they, with their loved one, able to choose where they will live
  - h. Some families & people shy away from exploring living independently as they believe it means living alone without help & support
22. There are few visible positive examples of people living independently successfully in Northants
23. Many anxieties about the ability of people to live independently continue these include thoughts such as:-
- a. he/she won't be able to cope on their own
  - b. he/she won't have the capacity to understand their rights & obligations or be able to sign agreement or tenancy agreement
  - c. they won't be safe, they'll be bullied or have accidents at home
  - d. they won't understand how to pay bills, cook for themselves & clean their home
  - e. their needs are just too complex to be able to live independently & it will be too costly

These fears are very real for people but through the sharing of positive experiences, being honest about the challenges, good planning & support systems many of these fears can be reduced

### **Care Management Helping people to access housing.....**

24. Although it is not the direct role of Social Care colleagues to provide housing, care management teams do spend lots of time helping people to find a place to live. This happens when people first contact the team & now & again there after when customer needs are reviewed.
25. However, it is clear that:-
- a. Social care colleagues do not have the time or staff capacity to review people's needs & housing choices annually, also
  - b. The Care Management Review Form, Support Plan & Self Directed support questionnaires don't include any questions about people's accommodation needs

- c. Only the Common Assessment Framework (CAF) – First Visit Assessment Form has one brief question about housing
  - d. The Person centred planning form do have a whole section on housing desires but it is not clear when, with whom & how often this form or approach is used
  - e. Also it appears where person centred reviews are used to help provide information about another topic housing information is rarely collected, such as with the recent review of day service customers
26. Many people who live at home with their families do not receive care services so may not have this limited opportunity to reconsider how & where they live

### **Issues for Young People.....**

27. How & when do young people start to learn about how they choose to live in the future. The process of exploring this & other needs begins about the age of 14 via the Year 9 review. At present, from analysing the various returns, it appears that:-
- a. few comments or thoughts are ever logged against the housing question on the review form
  - b. Other items are mentioned as a greater priority little is mentioned about people's desires about where they live

**Q - Do schools deliver any specific modules to students about housing desires, options & expectations?**

28. At the age of 16 more responses about housing appear but few people are considering living independently with most focusing on educational & employment needs
29. Often its not really until 20 -21 that people begin to consider their housing desires as they come to the end of college courses and, at present, many return home to live with families (figures)

**Q - Do we have any figures of the number of young LD people in college placements – and the housing choices they then take)**

30. A concern has been raised about the right of people to choose to live out of Northamptonshire. It is felt young people are being

discouraged from choosing this option, particularly in respect of going to college, unlike other young people of their age

## What It Costs.....

31. The cost of residential & nursing care to NCC in 2009 -10 was nearly £30 million pounds. This paid for the care of about 480 people, this equals spending per person of roughly £62,500. This is just over 40% of all monies spent on LD services in Northants
32. Of a group of 16 neighbouring local authorities, Northants has the 5<sup>th</sup> highest proportion of residential & nursing care provision for LD customers at over 50%, with Lancashire having the lowest at only 15%, and Somerset the highest at nearly 60%
33. The numbers of people who live with their families in 2009-10 was 320, of these \_\_X\_\_% receive care services or have a personal budget

## HELP TO LIVE INDEPENDENTLY

### Care & Support to Live Independently.....

Two of the major ingredients which will help people to live successfully in the community is domiciliary care & housing related support services.

34. Last years funding for domiciliary care was \_\_\_\_million pounds, this helped \_\_ people to live with their families & \_\_\_\_ to live independently. This equates to \_\_\_\_£ per person. (Dawn any ideas)
35. Significant additional investment in this form of provision could enable many more people to move on from the limited choice of residential care & living at home with families
36. In 2009-10 just over \_\_\_\_£ million pounds was spent on providing various supported living options in Northants. These services seem to have supported 188 people.  
(any one any ideas on these numbers?)
37. The provision of more housing related support would also significantly enable more people to try living independently.
38. Housing related support is mainly provided via the Supporting People Team. In Northants between 270 & 300 people with a

Learning Disability are helped to maintain their independence via the Supporting people programme at the cost of £1.1 million per year. This equals about £4,000 per person per year. (Andy Please check)

39. Housing related support is a vital ingredient in helping people to live in the community successfully. Unfortunately, we discovered that many people have limited awareness of the Supporting People Programme, of housing related support or how to access services. Nor are they aware it is help they can receive along side an existing care package when living in your own home.

Q - Are people regularly referred or informed about SP services if applications for Care are unsuccessful. Or

Q- Do colleagues at local housing offices also refer or provide information about housing support services?

### **Finding Out About Care options, what happens now.....**

40. To live independently successfully many people will need to arrange Care provision to support them in their new home.
41. Some people will receive either an Individual Budget or a direct payment to do this. And with these customers are encouraged to arrange this for themselves. Presently, customers don't have access to the same lists of provider information as Care Management teams & can be unclear which organisations to approach for services
42. Market place events are held where providers share their 'wares' directly with customers & supporters, but there are few of these per year. How do people find out about care options as & when their needs arise outside of care management reviews & market place events?
43. A Directory of Care Services in Northants, produced by 'Care Choices', is available. However, this directory is dominated by provision for Older people, is not in an easy read format & has limited information about services for people with a Learning Disability

## **Other Help to Live Independently.....**

44. Other issues that some people are experiencing when living independently include:-
- a. Feelings of isolation & loneliness
  - b. Difficulties with keeping contact with friends when they live in other areas
  - c. Problems with neighbours, being bullied or social expectations
  - d. Contacting utility companies & other services where staff don't understand their communication needs
  - e. Mixing in their local community
  - f. Choosing other housing options when living independently – who helps?
  - g. Falling out with co-tenants in shared housing

## **Plans to help people consider where they live .....**

Reprovision work planned

Proposed SP Accommodation based changes

45.

## **Housing Issues for Older People with a Learning Disability**

### **THE HELP PEOPLE NEED TO ADDRESS SOME OF THESE ISSUES**

- We need clear ways to help people, & their supporters, consider their housing needs & desires regularly when they are ready
- More needs to be done to encourage all support agencies to expand the range of housing options they share with people
- It needs to be clear what each agency can do to help people consider & meet their housing needs, particularly Social Services & District/Borough Housing Offices
- Information about housing options & responsibilities needs to be easily accessible in the public domain

- A comprehensive regular review of housing options should be available & this could be lead by colleagues from local housing offices with possible local 'Housing Networks'
- People & supporters would benefit from being aware of others going through the same process as them. This will help possibly plan solutions together
- It needs to be clear who will follow up with a person if they say they wish to live differently via person centred reviews or other means
- More positive stories of people living successfully in the community within a variety of housing options should be shared & available
- Once they have moved, people also need practical support to help them 'connect' into their communities, make contact with neighbours & make friends in their area
- Some people will need an opportunity to 'try out' living independently with support. Housing & support providers may be able to offer 'trial tenancies' to people
- There are at least 4 stages that people need help if they are to live happily in their chosen housing option
  - (1) Exploring general housing possibilities & for some people getting a chance to have a trial at doing this
  - (2) Exploring their specific housing needs, desires, options, support requirements & related costs in detail
  - (3) Making decisions & moving home
  - (4) Living in the community
    - Living with care, support & assistive technologies
    - Dealing with issues around my home & neighbours
    - Connecting into my community
    - Making it work

Presently local housing staff could be able to help with stage 1, Care & support providers with stage 4, but a need for specific help exists re: stages 2 & 3 - exploring options in detail & making decisions

## **POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS & ACTIONS**

1. Enhance local housing staff training, service tools & techniques to be able to help people with Learning Disabilities explore their housing desires & options
2. Ensure all 'lettings' approaches are sensitive to the needs & abilities of all applicants particularly those with a learning disability
3. Clarify that District/ Borough Council housing colleagues have lead responsibility to support people to consider their housing desires
4. Ensure Social Care staff refer customers who wish to review their housing situation to their respective local housing office as early as possible
5. Set up a programme to enable people to (a) explore the many ways that people live & (b) 'try out' independent living options
6. Review the housing needs & desires of all people known to social services and provide detailed support to help people choose their desired solution & move home if they wish
7. **'Housing Connectors' - Helping People explore & create their housing desire** - To help address the needs mentioned above in stages 2 & 3 a 'housing connections service' could be created. Such support would be available for both those living at home with their families & those in residential care.
8. **Community Connectors Service - Helping People Connect in to Their Communities**

Delos are offering this at present which is part funded by 'The Developing Community Lives project', this model could be also be used to help people to settle in once they move into the community.

## **9. Community Housing Networks**

In order to help people at each of the stages mentioned above, locally based Community Housing Networks could be set-up. These networks would be made up of people with a Learning Disability, their supporters, families, interested members of the community, local advocates & local businesses. The networks would link into all relevant local bodies & each of the LDPB locality groups and have a specific focus around housing.

Initially, one county wide housing network could be established with the intention that this branches into 7 locally based networks.

The Network(s) would help people:-

- Explore their housing options & desires
- Find out which organisations can help
- Communicate their needs & wishes
- Plan & design their own housing 'model' & cost their possible choices
- Come together to create & negotiate their desires
- Plan required support & care

These would be self sustaining networks which could support people to feel connected in their community & be a place where people are able to help each other. Ultimately, these mutually supportive networks could become a community resource for all.

Equally, as group members share their housing desires they may also choose to combine together & approach Housing Associations or other housing providers to 'commission' individual or collective housing solutions. Community Networks could also become the receptacle of a range of information & tools which would help people create their housing desire. The existing project website could be modified to share these resources.

The networks could be a form of social enterprise & be sustained using a mixture of contributed finance & time.

They could be set up through a combination of targeted & time limited investment from organisations such as NCC, local District / Borough Councils, local housing or support providers, community development agencies, local business & volunteered time contributed by community members.

**Other Ideas.....**

## **10. Community Housing Models**

Some residential care settings could be modified into community style 'interdependent living options. Here people would have their own tenancy or purchase their own space within a community setting & share other communal facilities, rather on the lines of extra care / sheltered housing settings or co-housing projects.

Some meals & common garden areas could be shared with others being private space to each resident. Such a model would provide some level of independence & personal control for residents along side community connection & engagement with others.

Opportunities to mix with the broader community may be possible & some projects could offer units for other vulnerable people in the locality to buy or rent. Thus making the setting an open community where any one in need in the locality can receive housing support or care on site.

### **DRAFT ACTION PLAN**

List to be added.....

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