

**London Borough of Haringey
Supported Housing Review**

**Report of the Supported Housing
Review Working Group**

March 2017

Members of the Supported Housing Review Working Group

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Council staff advising the Supported Housing Review Working Group

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Foreword

Housing is not just about bricks and mortar, it is also about people and communities. This is true of all housing, but the importance of this connection between what residents need to be able to lead happy, successful and independent lives and the homes they live in is particularly critical in the area of Support Housing.

The phrase 'Supported Housing' can cause a lot of confusion and is often understood simply to mean sheltered housing, or other specialist provision for older residents. Supported housing does include this, but it is about much more.

Supported housing is about recognising that not all residents can live independently without some additional support and assistance, and providing that support in an integrated way. So supported housing does include housing for older people, but it also include housing for young people leaving care, for residents of all ages with learning disabilities and for residents with mental ill-health. For some residents Supported Housing provides an opportunity to live independently within an environment where care and support is available, while for others it can provide a setting with more intensive support, as a route to more independent living in the future. Either way, Supported Housing is a vital part of fulfilling our vision and objectives for housing in our borough.

While Supported Housing plays such an important role, it often does not enjoy the same high profile as other housing issues, nor the same level of scrutiny and attention. This review is in part about changing that, and putting Supported Housing firmly in the mainstream of housing discussions. However, this review is fundamentally concerned with taking a step back to understand what the needs are for Supported Housing and considering whether current supply really meets these needs. We have found that in some important areas, the current stock of Supported Housing in the borough, owned and managed both by the council and other providers, does leave some important gaps for the future. This review identifies what needs to be done to improve the quality of Supported Housing and the ways in which provision needs to be reshaped to better match the needs of Haringey residents.

I'd like to finish by thanking all of those who have contributed so much time, energy and effort to thinking through the hugely complex area of Supported Housing. In particular I'd like to thank our project manager Gill Taylor for her incredibly hard work over many months and all of the councillors who have given up their time to take part in this review, all of whom have contributed many thoughts and ideas which have shaped our recommendations.

Councillor Alan Strickland
Chair, Supported Housing Review Working Group
Cabinet Member for Housing, Planning and Regeneration

Our priorities for supported housing

These are very challenging times for local councils trying to exercise strong leadership on housing, particularly in London. Additionally, proposed changes to the future funding of supported housing leaves significant uncertainty for councils and service users about the future of this small but vital housing provision. Numerous actual and proposed policy changes made by the Government will see further changes and reductions to welfare benefits, social care support and house building, something which affects the most vulnerable, those living in supported housing, the most.

Despite these significant challenges, the Supported Housing Review Working Group is clear that the Council should exercise strong and clear leadership to support our most vulnerable residents during periods of housing or health crisis and to manage stable and independent lives despite the challenging economic times.

The Working Group is clear that the approach to supported housing in Haringey should be driven by a clear understanding of need and an unrelenting drive for quality.

As a Working Group we were guided by, and endorse, the draft vision and principles set out in the Council's draft Supported Housing Review Recommendations Framework.

Vision

Haringey is a place where vulnerable residents can access flexible and personalised housing support services that maximise their independence and inclusion within diverse mixed communities.

Principles

1. Cross-cutting Prevention
2. Community Inclusion
3. Integrating Support & Care
4. Commissioning for the Future

Why conduct a Supported Housing Review?

Periodic reviews of supported housing are good practice within housing commissioning as they ensure the Council has a firm grasp of the needs of vulnerable residents as well as ensuring services are strategically relevant and delivering good value.

Completion of this Supported Housing Review was identified as an objective under Priority 5 of the Corporate Plan 2015-18. Due to the interconnected relationships between housing, health, support and social care, the Supported Housing Recommendations Framework will be jointly owned & underpinned by Priorities 2 and 5, with Priority 1 playing an important role in steering the development of housing support interventions for care leavers and homeless young people.

The Council is operating in an environment of unprecedented change. There is increasing pressure to make savings that affect the revenue funding available for housing support and care. The Care Act (2014) and the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) set challenging targets for transformation in Adult Social Care. Supported housing and housing support have a significant role to play in enabling transition from residential care and preventing homelessness amongst an array of other areas of social care, health and housing provision.

As well as the pressure on revenue funding, the demand for temporary accommodation for homeless households and increasing demand for Extra Care for older people and adults with severe disabilities places competing pressure on the Council's physical assets. It is crucial that Council housing stock is utilised effectively to support those who are the most vulnerable and in need. It is also crucial that appropriate opportunities to develop specialist housing are realised, to offer high quality care and support services that meet the needs of current and future populations.

The work of the Supported Housing Review Working Group

The group looked at this issue fairly and objectively based on the evidence presented by officers. The working group is made up of six councillors from both parties. The group has been supported by a dedicated Project Manager with 13 years experience in the supported housing sector, as well as senior Council officers responsible for the areas of housing and social care.

This document is a short summary report, capturing the recommendations of the Working Group. The detailed evidence we considered can be found in the Supported Housing Review reports, and I recommend those interested in this work read all three of those reports.

The conclusions of the Supported Housing Review are presented in three reports:

Needs and Gaps Analysis

Report on the Outcome of the Supported Housing Review (Part 1)

Supported Housing Recommendations Framework

The role of the Supported Housing Review Working Group

The Review was a self-governing group where decision-making was collaborative and inclusive, basis on consensus being reached among the Review Group members.

The role of the Group was to support the Cabinet Member for Housing, Planning and Regeneration in providing overall leadership to the Review.

At our first meeting, we agreed the following Purpose and Roles and Objectives for the Group:

Purpose

The Members Working Group has been convened in an advisory capacity, with membership from both the Labour and Liberal Democrat Groups, to steer the final stages of the Supported Housing Review.

Members will consider a range of data, intelligence and options about supported housing, which will steer the Cabinet Members decisions on what to present to Cabinet in March 2017. This will form the Housing Support Transformation Framework; a strategic foundation for the commissioning and development of services that meet the current and future needs of vulnerable adults in Haringey.

Roles and Objectives

To provide advice and insight to the Cabinet Member in making decisions on the following:

- Supported housing needs and gaps analysis
- Summary findings from the Supported Housing Review
- Guiding strategic principles for housing support
- Summary recommendations for priority client groups
- A final draft Strategic Framework

Key issues that emerged for the Supported Housing Review Working Group

Our examination of the issues has made clear:

The diversity of support needs is significant

The diversity and range of supported housing types, support models and client groups means that decisions about the future are more complex than originally expected. The complexity of the challenges facing Haringey around social care, homelessness prevention and housing development makes clear that no single option will deliver what we need. A more nuanced and sophisticated approach is needed to address the needs of different groups, something which will take time and sensitivity to implement.

Unmet need is central to understanding the choices

It is clear that the needs of people in Haringey have changed at a much faster pace than the support and care offered by supported housing. Our current models and practices are unable to meet the demands of those currently in need and as such are not offering the best value to our residents or the Council. Changes must be made in supported housing to address the unmet and emerging support needs in the borough which is both exciting and challenging to undertake.

Importance of centring the views, ideas and experiences of service users where changes are proposed

Focus on involving service users, learning lessons from previous developments and taking vulnerable people on a journey that clearly demonstrates the need for change. The council must give the time and energy required to do this sensitively, bearing in mind the particular needs of people living in supported housing.

There is a need to build new supported housing

The financial information presented to the group has been stark. It is clear that the Council, like many local authorities, does not have sufficient funding to continue providing adult social care, housing support and homelessness prevention in the same way.

In discussing the options, the evidence presented has emphasised that we must find alternatives to residential care, reduce hospital admissions and break the costly cycle of homelessness experienced by those with multiple and complex needs. To do this we must build new Extra Care provision in the borough, something that the council is not in a financial position to do alone. We must also build or reconfigure existing provision to create environments that are tailored to the needs of vulnerable Haringey residents, recognising the vital role that place plays in an array of personal, social and economic outcomes.

In building new supported housing, the Council will need to partner with organisations who can bring to bear significant funding and expertise in developing this type of housing provision.

Recommendations of the Future of Housing Review

Below we summarise the overall recommendations of the Review. In addition we wish to make two supplementary recommendations that are outside of the remit of the Supported Housing Review but which we feel are necessary for the delivery of improved services to vulnerable people. The reports of the Project Manager set out more detail on each recommendation and how they will be delivered.

Overarching Recommendations

- Create a **Supported Housing Tenants Charter** that sets out our commitments to supported housing service users affected by change as part of this programme. It should recognise the intersecting identities and experiences of vulnerable people, give a platform to marginalised voices and embed co-design as the route to achieving a transformed supported housing offer in Haringey.
- Amend the current **social lettings quotas** for people leaving supported housing to create more distinct groups and accurately reflect data on need
- The Housing Strategy commitment to **build new specialist housing** should be rigorously explored across the borough to increase the available supply of supported housing.
- Commissioning practice should **mandate improved and streamlined data collection and outcomes** monitoring practices in supported housing as well as a **commitment to provider collaboration** to create intergenerational activities, work experience and volunteer opportunities between schemes.
- Build on the proud LGBT history in Haringey by addressing as a priority the lack of **data, professional training and visibility of the LGBT supported housing community**, with particular focus on older and younger people, people from BAME communities and those with disabilities.

Specific recommendations

Improving supported housing for young people with vulnerabilities

Our recommendations:

- Commission an entirely **new and integrated pathway of supported housing** for homeless young people and care leavers, with a range of provision types, settings and support-levels that enable young people to build on their skills, interests and assets towards independent living.

- Create a specially designed **resilience and independent living skills programme** for young people in supported housing as a prerequisite to move-on, ensuring young people leave supported housing with the skills and confidence to never return, to reduce tenancy failure, boost employability and strengthen healthy and positive choice-making.

Improving supported housing for residents with mental ill-health

Our recommendations:

- Create a joint **specialist health, housing and wellbeing team** whose remit is to prevent homelessness and dependence for adults with mental health conditions via brief housing interventions, medication support and transition planning when leaving supported housing/ hospital/prison etc. This team will work in locations across the borough, in partnership with housing officers, revenue and benefit teams, GP surgeries and BEHMT teams to intervene early in mental health crisis.
- Conduct a specific **evaluation of the mental health supported housing pathway** with specific focus on contributions to reducing hospital admissions, reducing delayed discharge from hospital, employability, skills and community contributions and reducing risk and offending behaviour
- **Increase the capacity of the successful Housing First** scheme, in recognition of the excellent outcomes it has enabled adults with very complex mental health and homelessness histories to achieve
- **Pilot the Psychologically Informed Environment approach** to create a designated service for women with complex needs around trauma, substance use and homelessness.

Improving supported housing for residents with learning disabilities

Our recommendations:

- Remodel some of the supported housing commissioned by the Council to create more supported housing for those with higher needs which is much needed as an alternative to residential care and to support adults with more complex and interconnected disabilities and health conditions
- Create a 10-unit **social lettings quota for adults with learning disabilities** as a route into independent living out of supported housing.

- commission a **specialist floating support scheme** for those living independently, which enables people to build strong peer and community networks, pool resources and add value to the communities in which they live

Improving supported housing for older people

Our recommendations:

- Work with Homes for Haringey to **remodel the current supported housing offer for older people**, moving to a hub and cluster approach with 8 open-access hub services spread equally between the east and west of the borough that will make better use of facilities as well as supporting older people in a more personalised way.
- **Commit to building 200 units of Extra-Care provision in the borough** by exploring the potential for redevelopment of existing sheltered schemes for this purpose. This will start with in-depth appraisals of nine Council sheltered schemes as well as in discussion with RSL's about other suitable sites in the borough.
- Explore the reconfiguration of one sheltered scheme into supported housing for young parents, for whom there is currently no supported housing in Haringey
- **Increase the availability of floating support for older people** to enable extended independence in the community and ensure earlier access to assistive technologies, adaptations and social inclusion activities

Supplementary Recommendations

- The Council should undertake a further piece of work on **move-on from supported housing**, exploring shared housing models, rent deposit schemes, tenancy resilience training and nominations into social housing properties
- The Council and Homes for Haringey should undertake a further piece of work to **improve the downsizing offer** for under-occupiers in Haringey, to include exploration of seaside moves, incentive payments, home-sharing