
People First: Housing and Home.

**Torbay Commissioning Strategy
for Older Peoples Housing and
Support**

2008-2011

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Torbay Supporting People, Torbay Housing
Services

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Glossary of Terms

Black and Minority Ethnic (BME): Generic term for people or communities who are not White British.

Choice Based Lettings (CBL) – The system by which vacancies in social housing are let out to tenants in Torbay, vacancies are advertised and applicants for social housing (and tenants who want to transfer) apply for a vacancy. Applicants can see the full range of available properties and can apply for any home to which they are matched (e.g. a single person would not be eligible for a 3-bedroom house). Priority is given to those with urgent needs, but where possible properties are allocated on the basis of who has been waiting the longest.

DCLG – Department of Communities and Local Government, previously **ODPM** – Office of the Deputy Prime Minister and **DETR** – Department of Environment Transport and the Regions.

Decent home – one which is wind and weather tight, warm and has modern facilities. **Direct Payments:** Allows a person to have their care funding paid direct to themselves so they can choose and pay for their own care provider.

Disabled Facility Grant (DFG): A grant available to disabled people to help with adaptations to the home.

DOH: Government Department of Health

DWP- Government Department of Work and Pensions

Extra Care Housing: Independent flats with access to 24 hour care from the scheme. This provides flexibility for people to access care when they need it whilst retaining independence.

Individual Budgets: A way of bringing together funding from various sources for an individual to enable services to be provided for and paid for in a more integrated way.

Intermediate Housing is housing at prices and rents above those of social rent, but below market price or rents. These can include shared equity products (Shared Ownership), other low cost homes for sale and intermediate rent.

Life Time Homes – A new house or flat that has been designed to meet the needs of most households. The aim is to have build-in design features that make the home flexible enough to meet whatever comes along in life: a teenager with a broken leg, a family member with serious illness, or families with a pushchair.

LGBT- abbreviation that stands for individuals who are: Lesbian, Gay, Bi Sexual and/or, Transsexual.

OPSSG - Older Person Strategy Sub Group. Responsible for making recommendations to the Supporting People Commissioning Body on policy and financial matters concerning housing and related support services for Older People.

Person Centred Planning (PSP) focuses on individuals and their needs by putting them in charge of defining the services they need, not on defining what is needed according to the services that may or may not be available to them.

Referral Hub is a new team providing the central contact point for all referrals to Supporting People services.

Registered Social Landlord (RSL): Generally used to mean the same as Housing Association.

Social rented housing is rented housing owned and managed by Housing Associations, for which guideline target rents are determined through the national rent regime and are regulated by the Housing Corporation.

Supporting People (SP) is the programme for distributing public spending on housing related support services. The SP commissioning body is made up of representation from Torbay Council, Torbay Care Trust (TCT) and Devon & Cornwall Probation Service.

TAN – Torbay Advice Network – a partnership of advice and information services operating in Torbay.

Telecare (also called assistive technology): A range of established and new equipment that can be fitted in people's homes to allow constant monitoring and access to help. The term includes community alarms, which allow a person to access help in an emergency through a personal pendant or pull cord in their home. More recent developments include movement sensors, which can track person's movements and can be

Torbay Care Trust (TCT): is a combined community health and adult social care service, in December 2005 social care teams from Torbay Council joined with community health colleagues to form the new NHS Trust. TCT is responsible for commissioning, or buying, services on behalf of local people, from hospitals, care homes, residential homes and from home care agencies.

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2. Introduction

Within this Strategy, 'older people' are considered to be those aged 50 years plus, it is generally accepted, that whilst few people in the group between 50 and 60-65 would regard themselves as old, they may accept that they are moving into a new phase of life. It is a point at which life circumstances start to change in ways that have implications for the future. People also gradually become more likely to have to deal with health issues or start to consider new priorities for themselves or their families. In doing this, however, it is recognised that the reality is that much of the issues this document deals with and therefore the final strategy itself will be of most relevance to people from their mid-60's onwards.

For the rest of this document reference will be made to older people as "people".

Torbay Council recognises the needs to plan to meet the demands and wishes of its increasing older population. Housing and housing related support services will need to be provided in a more flexible and responsive way and will need to be better coordinated with other services.

This strategy is underpinned by approaches identified in government guidance aimed at providing an effective delivery of services within a context of housing choice. Support services will be integrated into a single assessment approach to care, support and accommodation needs. This structured approach will be available to all people, regardless of tenure, applying to both homeowners and tenants alike.

This Strategy provides a framework for support with people rather than houses at the centre of delivery, and will look to enable a further 500 people within Torbay to have access to housing related support targeted to meet those who are in need of it.

The strategy highlights the need for a good quality stock of affordable housing in order that they form the foundations from which support and care needs can be delivered. Delivering appropriate care and support services where they are needed is central in meeting the aim of community delivery.

This strategy forms part of Torbay's over arching Older People's Strategy; "People First" – a strategy to improve the quality of life of people aged 50 plus living in Torbay.

2.1 Context

In Torbay 43% of the population are over 50 years of age and almost 30% are over 60. The population in Torbay is growing faster than the national and regional average due to inward migration of retirees - in Torbay, between 2001 and 2004 the population of those over 50 grew by 2.5%. It is important therefore that the Council has a clear plan to meet the needs this population. This document sets out our plans to meet the housing and housing support needs into the future for this growing population.

This strategy is based on consultation with older people in Torbay as well as the

providers of services.

There is considerable change in the direction of services for older people at both national and local level. Nationally the government documents 'The National Service Framework for Older People' and 'Quality and Choice for Older people' have set the agenda. Services need to move away from an institutional and paternalistic culture towards seeing aging as a natural stage in life and ensuring services allow for choice and promote independence. At a local level the way services for people develop is now significantly driven by the Supporting People strategy.

2.2 Our Vision and Objectives

People in Torbay will live as independently as possible in their chosen home, with dignity and the support needed that prevents any unnecessary move to institutional care.

In order to achieve this vision the aim of the Strategy should be to ensure that people in Torbay will have access to affordable, good quality, adapted homes and support services allowing them the ability, freedom and power to make choices about where and how they live.

Our Objectives are to:

1. **Ensuring a range of quality and suitable housing to meet the needs of people in Torbay**, ensuring decent homes standards are met across the Bay, and that housing is fit for purpose.
2. **Improve access to a choice of suitable Housing and Housing Related Support Services**, ensuring adequate provision is made for Extra Care Housing where the need is identified
3. **Improve Partnership working**, ensuring joint working with a range of agencies
4. **Meet individual needs** – ensure all service treat people with dignity and respect, taking full account of a persons background, values, beliefs and lifestyles.
5. Improve the range and accessibility of **Information and advice**.
6. **Involve People** in the quality, design and delivery of housing and housing related support services.

This should be done in a context of encouragement to develop innovative solutions, maximising learning from others experience.

1. The Strategic Context

This strategy is designed to ensure that Torbay Supporting People meets national government targets and is also in line with both the Council's overall strategic aims and connects with other local strategies for people particularly with the Care Trust.

The following is a summary of some of the key national policies relating to this Strategy.

3.1 National strategies

- **National Service Framework for Older People DOH 2001.** The framework sets eight standards and sets its aim to remove age discrimination, providing person centred care, promoting older people's health and independence and fitting services around people's needs.
- **Our health, our care, our say: a new direction for community services. DOH 2006.** The principal recommendations of this report are:
 - Individual budgets,
 - Development of new responsive care models, such as extra care housing and telecare.
 - Streamlined assessments between agencies to provide more proactive, preventative services moving from a single assessment process into a common assessment framework.
 - Ensuring community services such as extra care housing, intermediate care services, community equipment, adaptations, intensive support at home and support for carers are used instead of residential care. Also that more centres are used to locate services together in one place.
 - Involving those whose needs are greatest and who are often least heard.
- **A Sure Start Approach to Later Life (DCLG Jan 06).**
 - "A Sure Start to later life" is a single "gateway" to services approach. The proposals are based on a partnership approach to the joint commissioning of and provision of Older Person's Support Services.
 - All support services including those available to tenants of Sheltered Housing Schemes will need to be reconfigured to ensure they work in as a "single accessible gateway" to the other services available.
- **20-20 a Vision for Housing and Care:** The 20-20 vision is "A society where people will be able to access and benefit from the housing support, telecare and health services they aspire to, with a full knowledge of the options available"¹ The 20-20 vision identified many key issues, relevant to the redesign of Housing Related Support Services as follows:
 - Changing the use of social sheltered housing schemes where demand is low and or the design/location is unsuitable for older people and assessing the viability of existing schemes as hubs for local older people services
 - Re-evaluating the scheme manager role as provider of floating support to other sheltered housing in the area and older people in their own homes
 - Developing new models for older people with learning disabilities/dementia
 - Recognising the value of 'balanced communities' in sheltered housing
 - Providing advice/information services from schemes

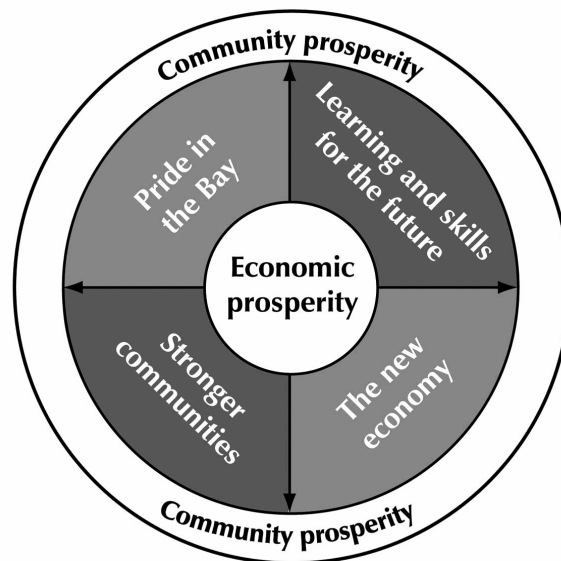
¹ (20-20 partners include EROSH, Telecare Services Association, Centre for Sheltered Housing Studies, National Housing Federation, Association of Retirement Housing Managers, Chartered Institute of Housing (CIH), Counsel and care, Elderly Accommodation Counsel and Federation of Black Housing Organisations)

- Partnering private developers and working with older people to develop new purchase options for older home buyers, possibly age friendly properties with built in Telecare options; live work apartments; flexible tenure models
- Developing a priced Telecare menu option approach to housing and care needs that can upscale and downscale as needs change
- Training housing staff on Telecare potential and planning for potential usage in all new developments
- Introducing Telecare options in outright sale properties and research its potential for lowering service charges associated with on-site managers
- Including Telecare considerations in Supporting People and Housing Strategies for all client groups

3.2 Local plans and strategies

- **The Community Strategy** - The Community Plan's vision is that of improved economic prosperity which impacts on a whole range of issues of concern to people such as employment, health, income deprivation and well-being generally and therefore, improve the lives of individuals and create greater community prosperity. Economic & Community prosperity is the priority for Torbay Council and its partners.

This is shown in the following diagram:



Pride in the Bay, The new economy, Learning and Skills for the future and stronger communities are themes identified that build community prosperity. The objectives outlined in this strategy fall largely within the stronger communities section of the community plan.

- **The Torbay Local Area Agreement: Healthier Communities and Older People Block** – aims to narrow the in-equality gap to enable people living in some of our most vulnerable communities to achieve their full potential whatever their age or circumstances. The wards that encompass these areas are Watcombe, Hele and Tormohun.

3.3 Summary of the Strategic Direction for Services.

The key messages are clear. Services need to be preventative, designed to **promote independence and choice**, integrated and designed to fit around people's needs rather than those of the service provider.

There are still issues of age discrimination that need to be rooted out and **people need to be fully involved in the planning and delivery of services**.

There should be increased flexibility in services to **help people in their home**. This includes health promotion and prevention services such as equipment, adaptations, alarms and help with repairs as well as intensive care services at home. There is a need for **inclusiveness** including those in harder to reach groups.

People can be empowered through direct payments or individual budgets and have greater choice to make their own decisions about the services they want to obtain.

2. The Population Profile in Torbay

Torbay has a notably higher proportion of older people per head of population than in either the national, South West Region or nearest neighbour comparator group. Further, this population is estimated to grow constantly over the next 25 years, at a far greater rate than the predicted growth in the South West or England as a whole. As such, to meet demand for this group of people, services will need to provide to a greater number than is currently the case.

80% of people aged 55 and over own their homes; 13% rent. Traditionally, Supporting People services have focused on the social housing sector due to historical funding streams. Since 2003, these constraints no longer exist, opening the opportunity to develop services where they are most needed. However between April 2003 and March 2006, the only source of funding to owner occupiers was the leaseholder scheme where no clear link could be established between systematic support provisions and funding and only one owner occupier over 50 years of age received a supporting people service. This has changed in 2007-08 with the introduction of 60 units of floating support following a remodelling of a private sector sheltered housing service. However it is clear that a great deal more support needs to be available to people who own their homes.

There is a wide range of housing, health and social care services available for people to enable them to remain living in their own homes; the system is complex with overlapping services provided by various agencies. There is a danger that some people living alone may not receive any services because they do not know how to find them and remain outside this network. Work is needed to ensure that those not accessing services are able to gain information on what services may be of help to them.

There are 2,689 registered nursing and care places in homes across Torbay (CSCI 2007). Based on the 2001 census statistics, it is estimated that in 2007, there were 2,054 over 55 people living in a care home in Torbay. The Torbay register of care homes shows 1,820 spaces registered as specialist homes for the Elderly. Given that fewer care home spaces are being commissioned due to changing demand

patterns, alternative supported accommodation options will need to be made available.

There are 1,264 carers who are over 75 years of age and a further 6,162 people over 75 living alone in Torbay. This demonstrates that there are potentially thousands of people across Torbay who could be suffering isolation. The Care Trust data base shows a 53% increase in people using care services between 04/05 and 05/06. Housing support services need to be reconfigured to meet a far greater number of people. Sheltered Housing schemes, currently providing social activities aimed at promoting health and wellbeing could be opened up to the wider community and encourage participation.

In Torquay 44% of those over 75 years of age (approximately 6,952 households) are living in accommodation that does not meet decent homes standards. Consideration needs to be given to targeting help to assist home owners improve the standard of their housing. This could be addressed by ensuring the home improvement service is targeted to meet these needs.

Many people make it clear they wish to remain living in their own homes; a major obstacle is the need for assistance with low-level jobs around the house such as changing light bulbs and low-level maintenance jobs. The home improvement service and the Age Concern handyperson service would both have a role to ensure that the maximum number of service users are benefiting from services on offer.

Depression is present in between 12-15% of people over the age of 65 and dementia affects 5% of the over 65 population rising to 20% for those over 80. The links between health and housing are increasingly recognised and housing can have a strong positive or negative effect on a persons well being. 'Effective housing allied to the right care, support and wider services....can be the springboard that enables older people to remain involved and live their lives to the full.' (Quality and Choice for Older Peoples Housing DETR). Mental health issues, particularly depression and dementia are likely to impact on the need for more intensive support. Housing related issues can exacerbate depression (for example isolation from the community or ongoing problems with poor accommodation). Appropriate housing related support can enable people suffering from dementia to remain at home for longer.

The 2001 Census identified 24,390 people living in accommodation with more than 2 rooms too many for their needs, these people may at some time in the future consider the accommodation they are living in to be too large for their needs and may consider moving to smaller accommodation. In line with the earlier tables, it is likely that 80% of these will be owner occupiers. Plans will need to ensure that desirable options are available for those wishing to downsize.

A crude calculation of need for this client group is outlined below:

Number	Source
2,000	Care Home Population
6,000	Over 75's living alone
(1,600)	Sheltered, Leasehold and retirement housing – Not all will be single people

6,400	Potential need for additional services based on 2001 figures
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3. Housing and Related Support Services

5.1 Accommodation

Sheltered housing schemes

There are 854 units of sheltered housing contracted by Supporting People in Torbay. There are a further 11 units of “frail elderly” or ‘Extra Care making a total of 865 units of accommodation. These are all managed by Housing Associations registered with the Housing Corporation and provide rented accommodation for people.

Of these 854 units, approximately 200 homes fall below expected standards, such as sharing of facilities such as kitchens or bathrooms. There are also many small properties, including studio flats and bed-sitting rooms which are becoming increasingly difficult to let.

The majority of the population in Torbay live within 1½ miles of a Supporting People funded sheltered housing scheme. Most schemes are located in or near the most deprived areas of Torbay.

The Supporting People strategy requires improved targeting of support within the sheltered schemes, provision of community based support in surrounding neighbourhoods and to ensure that the accommodation is fit for purpose, suitable for people with a range of disabilities.

The Supporting People Service reviews carried out in 2006, identified that a significant proportion of support services provided were good quality. However Sheltered Accommodation is generally allocated through Choice Based Lettings and is restricted by age but not involving an assessment of support needs, work with Sheltered services has identified that not all people living in sheltered schemes have support needs. This substantiates the need for more targeted support. A further factor in the need for refocusing of services is that, allocation to sheltered schemes is not available to homeowners regardless of support needs.

A review of the Torbay Sheltered schemes revealed that many people had actively “opted out” of the support planning process, stating that their needs were merely restricted to needing a suitable home. The opt-out rates in some schemes were between 30%-50% and in one scheme 70%. It was also noted that many of the people who received a “daily welfare check” believed that they had to receive it, irrespective of need. In many cases this check was being provided in addition to welfare checks by other agencies, with no coordination between agencies. This represents considerable duplication of work.

Leasehold Schemes

In Jul 2007 there were 769 leasehold units in older peoples home ownership schemes in Torbay, managed by a mix of private organisations and Housing Associations. In several of these approximately 70 people are currently funded for a small component of service charges to cover warden support. The funding is based

on individual financial assessment. Supporting People do not hold a contract with the Providers to deliver the support and there has proved to be no influence that can be had over the quality standards and support delivery arrangements. As this strategy is moving towards support based on individual assessment of support needs, a new strategy for leaseholder has been introduced that protects current recipients but will phase out the scheme over time.

Designated Housing

In addition there are 71 units of accommodation (5 Schemes) for people over retirement age, managed by housing associations that are not funded to provide support services.

5.2 Other Housing Support Services

Floating Support

There are currently 60 units of floating support specifically designated to working with Older People in their own homes. This service emerged from a remodelling of an existing accommodation based support service. This level of floating provision has been outstripped by demand within 3 months of the implementation of the service.

Community Alarms

The community alarm service is provided by the Torbay Care Trust. This service operates 24 hours a day, 365 days a year and is available to anyone who feels at risk in their own home because of age, disability, isolation, illness or vulnerability. The Community Alarm service works via an alarm unit connected to the telephone line. It can also be activated by a remote pendant which is worn around the neck or on a wrist band. Some of the Sheltered and Leasehold schemes above will be using this alarm service, although some may be purchasing from other providers. The Care Trust provide an alarm service for 2562 households over 54 years of age, 2050 of these are 75 and over as at 21 November 2006.

Home Improvement Service

The Home Improvement Service has been brought under the direct management of Torbay Council. The agency delivers a range of services including advice and advocacy, financial advice, and technical support. They help in providing adaptations to homes, promoting Independence, reducing delays in hospital discharge, and improving the quality of homes and health. There is however, scope to develop the services offered by this scheme.

Handyperson Service

A handypersons service is currently being offered through Age Concern with some funding from social services. A grant from the Lotteries Fund has recently ended and this will involve implications for ongoing delivery.

4. Implications for Services

This is grouped according to the objectives of this strategy:

Ensuring a range of quality and suitable housing to meet the needs of people in Torbay

- There are a high number of over 75 year olds living in what is defined as non-decent homes due to such things as lack of heating, damp or disrepair. The largest proportion of the dwellings that did not meet the Decent Homes Standard were occupied by residents with income under £10k, there are therefore issues of affordability and ability to maintain the dwelling. Therefore consideration needs to be given to targeting help to assist home owners improve the standard of their housing.
- Approximately 200 homes in sheltered schemes fall below expected standards; sharing of facilities such as kitchens or bathrooms or studio flats / bed-sitting rooms.

Improve access to a choice of suitable Housing and Housing Related Support Services, ensuring adequate provision is made for Extra Care Housing where the need is identified

- Torbay has a high number of older people, a population which is predicted to grow, as such to meet demand for this group of people, it is likely that services will need to provide to a greater number than is currently the case. This will mean a fundamental review of how services are delivered, their focus and challenging traditional expectations.
- There is a gap in accommodation and support for frailer people, particularly those suffering from dementia. The closures of residential homes together with the strategic aim to keep people living independently both indicate a need for extra care sheltered housing and a range of other options to enable people to stay at home for longer. There are significant numbers of people who suffer from dementia and more services are required to enable these people to remain at home as their condition worsens. Appropriate levels of extra care housing and use of telecare monitoring equipment could help.
- There are 5 sheltered schemes with more than 40 self contained units, consideration should be given to determine if the location and site may be suitable for conversion to extra care housing. It is proposed that a full assessment of the suitability of the current sheltered and leasehold housing is undertaken, assessing against minimum standards to operate as mainstream sheltered housing and any potential to develop into extra care housing
- Services are not currently reaching owner occupiers. Given that 80% of over 55 year olds own their own homes work is needed to ensure that that housing and the housing related support services are available for people in this sector. There is evidence to suggest that people move home when they consider their current accommodation is too much for them to manage. Alternative mixed tenure housing needs to be attractive to make this a real choice for people. Consideration needs to be given to commissioning leasehold housing with clear eligibility criteria which would attract Supporting People subsidy following a fairer charging assessment.
- In addition there are thousands of people over 75 years of age living alone or caring for someone across Torbay who could potentially be suffering isolation. Housing support services need to be reconfigured to meet a far greater number of people. Sheltered Housing schemes, currently providing social activities aimed at promoting health and wellbeing could be opened up to the wider community and encourage participation.

- To enable people to remain living in their own homes, there is a need for services offering help with low-level jobs around the house. The home improvement agency and the handyperson service would both have a role to ensure that the maximum number of service users are benefiting from services on offer.

Improve Partnership working, ensuring joint working with a range of other agencies.

- Agencies working with Service Users in Torbay may be delivering services to the same people without any coordination. It is necessary to work to develop a single gateway to services model using a single assessment approach with all key partners working and communicating effectively.
- There are gaps in understanding between agencies of the differing roles and services on offer.
- There is a need to improve the effectiveness and operation of the Older Person Strategy Sub Group (OPSSG) , it should become the driving force to delivering the necessary changes coming out of this strategy.

Meet individual needs – ensure all service treat people with dignity and respect, taking full account of a persons background, values, beliefs and lifestyles.

- The BME population in Torbay is small, but growing. Little is known of the housing related support needs within the range of BME populations in Torbay, further work is need to see if specific targeted services are needed.

Information and advice - Improve the range and accessibility of information and advice in line with feedback received.

- Work is needed to ensure that those not accessing services are able to gain information on what services may be of help to them.

Involve People in the design and delivery of services

- Work is needed to ensure that systems are put in place to enable people to be fully engaged with all areas of developing and delivering services.

5. Consultation Findings

Local Consultations

There has been a great deal of national and local consultation with people in recent years. Some examples of recent local consultation include: Surveys undertaken by Age Concern Torbay and Torbay Senior Citizens Forum ‘Out of the Shadows’ (involving some 750 responses) contributed to a series of workshops and seminars that took place between February and August 2006 designed to find out what’s important to local people and prioritise those issues. These priorities now form the basis of this plan.

The Supporting People Review of Older Peoples services.

Residents of sheltered housing were sent a survey questionnaire a part of the service review, the returns showed that Sheltered housing remains a popular choice. 95% of respondents were satisfied or very satisfied with their service.

Service users were however, concerned that changes to their service would result in the withdrawal of support staff based at housing schemes. Although, in reality the majority of Sheltered Housing staff no longer live in accommodation within the housing schemes but operate a mobile (peripatetic) support staff.

Consultation meeting on Older People's Housing and Support Strategy

The consultation on this strategy generally confirmed the direction of travel of this document and raised a range of issues related to housing some of which will need to be dealt with in partnership with other agencies in the authority. There was strong support amongst sheltered housing tenants for extending the role of sheltered housing to provide a neighbourhood facility and strong support for greater provision of Home Improvement services. Issues raised included:

- choice in terms of locality
- Provision of local amenities
- Choice in terms of support (and not needing support)
- Current quality of housing and maintenance issues
- Better communication from landlords
- The need for assistance and assurance mechanisms as needed required
- Loneliness
- Suitability of property and internal provisions such as showers v baths and greater attention to physical disability issues
- Better community safety, stronger police presence and personal safety
- Lack of transport and reducing public transport provisions

Key messages

Consultations with people generally confirm the direction of local and national strategies is correct. People want good quality housing that is safe and secure. They want opportunities to live a fulfilling life as part of the community whilst at the same time knowing that support is available when they need it. They want the information that enables them to maintain control over their needs and to be involved in how services are planned and delivered.

Having collected information about the strategic direction, the profile of people in Torbay, current service provision and the views of people themselves a number of areas have emerged as fundamental and therefore priorities for improving services for people in the Bay. The following sections explore these areas of service in more detail.

6. Achieving Our Objectives

8.1 Improve the quality of housing

Good quality housing is crucial if people are going to have the choice to remain at home and lead healthy and active lives within their communities. Housing needs to be well maintained, able to be adapted for mobility needs, warm, affordable, in a location close to amenities and transport and with access to other support services when they are needed. It is estimated that people spend between 70 and 90 % of their time in their home (ODPM report 'Planning for Mixed Communities'). This

highlights the impact housing can have on a person's mental and physical well being.

Poor housing can exacerbate health problems. For example cold homes can exacerbate existing respiratory and pulmonary diseases. Many people are asset rich but income poor and some need assistance in accessing grants and equity release schemes in order to maintain their homes. Suitable housing does not just depend on the quality of the individual dwelling but also on being located in a safe and thriving community.

Torbay is typical in owner occupation being the tenure of choice for the majority, 80% of people aged 55 and over own their homes; 13% rent. Torbay has no council housing but has a small stock of housing association properties representing 6% of the rented accommodation. For those in housing need, the private rented sector (PRS) offers the only viable alternative.

The total private sector is characterised by being in a notably poorer condition, with more serious faults and safety concerns.

The low income, elderly population and relatively high level of disability mean for those that own their own homes, addressing poor housing conditions may not be possible. This, coupled with the age of the stock, means a high level of investment is needed to maintain current homes and insure housing availability for future residents

Suitably for properties becomes an issue with the elderly population increases as it remains harder to stay at home and be independent in a traditionally designed property.

Fuel poverty is compounded by the low income and the high level of properties which lack basic insulation measures or which do not have a form of effective heating.

Affordable Housing

Affordable Housing includes social rented and intermediate housing, provided to specified eligible households whose needs are not met by the High Street home ownership market.

Social rented housing is rented housing owned and managed by Housing Associations (RSL's), for which guideline target rents are determined through the national rent regime and are regulated by the Housing Corporation.

Intermediate Housing is housing at prices and rents above those of social rent, but below High Street market home ownership prices. These can include Shared Ownership, other low cost homes for sale and intermediate rent.

There is a Government target to ensure all properties in the social rented sector are brought up to the 'Decent Homes' standards by 2010. A decent home is one which is wind and weather tight, warm and has modern facilities.

In relation to sheltered housing, people have higher expectations about the size and standard of accommodation they want and need as compared to the 1960s and 1970s when many schemes were built. As a result of expectations and the delivery of different services not all of the current schemes are fit for purpose. RSL's will need to undertake an options appraisal on all of their sheltered housing to determine the most effective way to meet these new standards and to assess the future viability of their schemes.

Torbay has a historically low stock of social rented housing, although the gap with the national average has narrowed slightly in recent years, this is shown in the table below:

Registered Social Landlord/LA dwelling stock as a % of overall dwelling stock

Area	2001	2002	2003	2004
Torbay	7.7%	7.7%	8.2%	8.3% (5,105 dwellings at 2004)
South West	14%	13.8%	13.7%	13.6%
England	20%	19.6%	19.3%	18.8%

Source: ONS/Torbay Key Stats 2006

Torbay has a lower than national average owner occupation rate (though within this there is a higher than national average rate of outright ownership), a larger than average private rented sector and a very low level of intermediate home owners.

Tenure in Torbay – All Ages

Area	Outright Owners	Own with Mortgage	Intermediate Home Ownership*	Rent Privately	Rent from Council/RSL
Torbay	37%	35.5%	1%	17.8%	8.2%
South West	34.1%	38.4%	0.6%	13.5%	13.5%
England	29%	38.8%	2.2%	12%	19%

Tenure in Torbay – 55 years and above

Outright Owners	Own with Mortgage	Intermediate Home Ownership*	Rent Privately	Rent from Council/RSL	Rent Free	Communal Setting
60%	20%	1%	7%	6%	1%	5%

Source: Census 2001*Low cost home ownership such as shared ownership. Figures do not always add up to 100% due to rounding.

Private Sector Housing

The government has brought in a new way of assessing private rented stock condition. The Housing Health and Safety rating focuses on the link between housing and health and is therefore of particular relevance.

The total private sector in Torbay is characterised by being in a notably poorer condition, with more serious faults and safety concerns. The physical condition of the private stock is poor and can equal some inner cities with a higher number of serious faults (category 1 hazards) and classed as non decent.

Research has shown that many people have low incomes, and a relatively high level of disability. For those that own their own homes, addressing poor housing conditions may not be possible. This, coupled with the age of the stock, means a high level of investment is needed to maintain current homes and insure housing availability for future residents

Layout and design of properties becomes an issue as it is harder to stay at home and remain independent in a traditionally designed property.

Fuel poverty is compounded by the low income and the high level of properties which lack basic insulation measures or which do not have a form of effective heating.

One of the key indicators set by central government is the numbers of vulnerable people living in non decent accommodation, for Torbay this indicator is higher than the national average. We face a huge challenge to address these issues by 2010 which is the date set to meet the target. These properties are mainly occupied by the very young and the very old, the very young who tend to occupy properties in the Private Rented Sector and the older population, being owner occupiers who are often unable to finance works or maintain properties.

Maximum use is made of joint funding of projects to directly target fuel poverty and improve energy efficiency eg WARM FRONT top ups. Changes in this area mean this initiative needs to remain very responsive to change.

New Build Housing

The Council currently has a target to facilitate the delivery of 145 new affordable homes per annum. Within this target 75% should be social rented accommodation of which 5% should be suitable for wheelchair users and the remaining 25% should be for Shared Ownership.

On the basis of Torbay's high level of housing need, 30% affordable housing is sought on all developments of 15 or more dwellings through the planning system. This includes:

- new build, conversions and mixed use schemes,
- sheltered housing developments,
- schemes designed for student accommodation where there is no legal restriction on future occupation solely to students,

All new build affordable housing funded by the Housing Corporation are required to meet their specific Scheme Development Standards, Secure by Design and Level 3

of the Code for Sustainable Homes which provides affordable warmth and other low energy costs.

There are currently two private developments in the pipeline that have older person's affordable housing as part of their planning contribution. It is particularly important when planning housing that there are positioned well with good transport links. People have raised issues of not being able to park close to home or difficulties in carers being able to park.

Planned Actions:

- In partnership with RSL's coordinate an options appraisal of all sheltered housing in Torbay to understand the suitability of each in relation to decent homes, disabled access, space standards and to assess potential for conversion to extra care housing.
- Develop a financial assistance policy that prioritises people in unsuitable housing on low income to improve their accommodation
- Create minimum design standards for all new accommodation.
- Ensure 5% of all new social rented housing is suitable for wheelchair users.
- Promote energy efficiency initiatives to reduce fuel poverty for people.
- Improve liaison with the Care Trust to suitably house disabled clients, targeting relocation grants to assist in the process.
- Improve prioritisation of clients for DFG works

8.2 Improve access and the range of Housing and Housing Related Support Services.

Support Assessment

Work is needed to develop a single assessment and eligibility process to define the level of need. This assessment will take into account the provision of and be coordinated with:

- Community Alarms and Telecare provisions
- Home Improvement, adaptation and handyperson services
- Access to medical care and broader health care initiatives
- Social Care provisions and welfare checks
- Care and extra opportunities
- Specialist Supporting People Support Services
- Voluntary sector service and groups
- Advice and information services including financial and benefits advice, Advocacy services and housing advice
- Continuing in employment and education opportunities
- Volunteering within community and participation in a "Time-Bank"
- Involvement of local clubs, groups, associations and local social activities
- Community groups
- Sustaining relationships, support and care delivered by family and friends.

Integrated Needs Assessment and Support Planning are one of the most important components of this Strategy.

It will only work effectively if all agencies work together to make best use of their current staffing and other resources, developing the partnership approach to

delivering services for people in Torbay. People should benefit from this service regardless of their type of housing and would go along way to providing extra choice for people who need some additional support to maintain their independence.

Sheltered Housing

Good quality sheltered housing provides preventative support giving people access to information and services and a feeling of security that there is someone there to help. Where care is needed, it is brought in from a variety of agencies as would happen in any other housing. However when a person's care needs become more intensive this can be difficult to manage. Some of these issues (particularly a need for 24 hour monitoring) may be addressed by telecare in future and all new developments should incorporate basic wiring for telecare equipment into the scheme specifications

National and local strategies make clear the need for sheltered housing to change. The Torbay Supporting People strategy identifies the need to move towards support that can be accessed on the basis of need and regardless of tenure. At the same time the design and standard of accommodation needs to be improved to enable people to stay in their housing as they age.

The initiative to open up the services provided at existing sheltered housing schemes for the wider community can offer greater access for people; the development of a community Hub. Many of the existing sheltered housing schemes provide communal facilities such as lounges, meeting rooms and kitchens on site. With the move to greater independence, many of these facilities are currently under used.

During the review process, it became clear that many schemes were already opening up their resources to the wider community and making the facilities available to other community based groups. These included; a Police surgery, acting as a polling station, providing a lunch club, a cookery group, running table top sales and other social events.

All schemes approached indicated that they would be willing to offer the facilities to other community groups so that further services could be offered. Examples of other groups that would be suitable for the wider community to use would be, falls prevention classes, diabetes support, memory café and advice surgeries.

Staff working in Sheltered schemes are in an ideal position to reach out and involve people not living at the scheme and offer real opportunities for support and involvement. Providers need to take a joint approach where they have schemes in close proximity so that activities can be shared and not duplicated.

In addition providers will need to develop a community support model, whereby staff working one to one with people resident in the sheltered scheme will also work with those in the local neighbourhood who have been identified support needs.

Extra Care Housing (ECH) / Very Sheltered Housing (VSH)

A higher degree of care can be made through the extra care model of housing. Torbay has one specific extra-care housing scheme operated by Riviera Housing Trust. Developed jointly by the Local Authority and The Care Trust, the scheme

currently supports 16 people with high care needs to live independently within their chosen community. Services provide accommodation that is a permanent home for life.

There is a sizeable gap in the supply of extra care housing in Torbay, in light of the growing population of those 85 years of age and above. There is a need to develop very sheltered and extra care housing services that will be able to respond to changing support needs.

The Torbay vision of Very Sheltered and Extra-Care housing is based on an integrated "Community Hub" model. In the first instance, schemes will be identified via the options appraisal where they are suitable for conversion to ECH. There may also be the potential for new build dependant on land availability. The developments would provide community based services with integrated housing, support and care and have the potential to act as the Community Hubs providing outreach care and support to people living in the local community who do not wish to move from their homes to receive care or support.

The standards for the provisions will be based on a range of standards including Devon standards for sheltered and extra care accommodation, Housing LIN design principles for extra care housing and information gathered from research on other schemes commissioned elsewhere. This will include ensuring close proximity to community facilities to avoid the isolation of frail residents and a range of tenures that offer a home for life including rental and ownership.

The Community Hub model for sheltered and Extra care will open up the possibility of providing an alternative support mix to meet specialist needs through interagency working and outreach provisions. Service user groups that have so far been identified for consideration in terms of specialist needs include:

- Mental Health Needs
- Dementia Support
- Sensory Loss
- Learning Disability

Development of specialist services will need to be undertaken as joint work across the relevant strategy sub-groups.

Torbay may be divided into the three distinct communities of Torquay, Paignton and Brixham. Social care functions in these areas are met through the services provided in the zones administered by the Torbay Care Trust, the needs for extra care should be considered in light of this zoned approach. The recent supporting people needs assessment will be used to agree with the Torbay Care Trust the future development requirements in relation to this area.

An assessment of domiciliary care provision to tenants of sheltered housing has shown that the numbers of people receiving care in an area support the development of Extra Care Housing. It is proposed that existing schemes supporting a number of people with high dependency should and be assessed for suitability for conversion to Extra Care Housing and where suitable, capital funding should be set to make any necessary changes to convert to Extra Care Housing. The schemes identified are

Coverdale Court (Paignton) and Seven Hills House (Torquay), both of which have been pilot schemes for the Telecare pilot. Both schemes have approximately 30 units each (61 in total).

In addition it is proposed that further investigation is undertaken to the feasibility of including Madrepore Place and St Martins Court (Torquay) which would account for a further 46 units and Coombe Bank (Brixham), 66 units (including 21 studio flats). Both schemes also are currently working with a high number of service users receiving care services.

However this does not increase the number of units available, as such plans need to be progressed to develop additional units.

Work will be needed to ensure the choice based lettings system operated by Homefinder could facilitate the required balanced community in relation to needs.

A partnership team will be established to design a common specification for the development of Older People's Housing within Torbay. To ensure a level playing field and commercial fairness it is expected that development partners will be acquired through a procurement process.

Private Leaseholder Schemes

There is a large number of leasehold schemes in Torbay, in contrast to other arrangements under Supporting People, payments are made to individuals and there is no contract with providers. There is no brokerage support as would be the case with individual budgets, and the level of service cost and therefore funding continues to be established outside of Supporting People decision making. Contact with leaseholders during the 3 years to 2006-2007 has indicated that there was little or no active support built into private leaseholder schemes. Many leaseholders did not even know their scheme manager. It is considered that this funding is not in reality paying for support but should rather be seen as in the context of the housing / welfare benefits for low income households.

Of the 1000 leaseholders living in Torbay, on average, there are around 90 service users who receive financial support from Supporting People to pay for this service. There is considerable financial risk to the programme in the event of a change in economic conditions as the numbers being supported may rise. Currently around £18,000 is spent on payments to leaseholders from Supporting People.

In the long term, leaseholder funding is not seen to be legitimate expenditure as there is little or no support being provided apart from a security presence, the provision is not assessed based on need and the current arrangements do not meet any kind of value for money requirements. As such the policy for leaseholders will be amended to phase out the scheme and no new applicants will be eligible for the service. This strategy moves older people's service towards service on a needs assessed basis, and leaseholders would be able to access these services if needed.

However, in line with the guarantee made by the ODPM at implementation of Supporting People that no existing service user would be worse off financially, existing service users will be transitionally protected. To take account of the broader

effect of withdrawal of funding for this area, further work needs to be undertaken in particular, consultation with the DWP.

Planned Actions

- Work with Supporting People Providers to:
 - Ensure all service users covered within the contract have been assessed as needing support
 - Ensure service users across all tenures have equal access to services.
 - Ensure support is delivered on a locality basis from within a network of sheltered housing schemes.
 - Promote a partnership approach between providers to ensure best use of their current staffing and other resources.
- Work with partners, develop a single integrated needs assessment process.
- Develop an ECH Strategy by:
 - Agreeing with Torbay Care Trust the future development requirements.
 - Identifying which schemes should be converted to ECH or where new build developments is required.
- Work with Homefinder, choice based lettings to ensure allocations to extra care and Sheltered housing takes account of support needs.
- Ensure a coordinated approach between all relevant strategy sub-groups, such as: Mental Health, Dementia Support, Sensory Loss, Learning Disability.
- Develop a Leaseholder Strategy to address the withdrawal of DWP funding as an option for new leaseholders

Community Alarms and Telecare

Community alarms and telecare equipment can provide additional security for people wherever they choose to live. They are also relatively cheap to provide. As such they offer a low cost, flexible and efficient service to people.

Telecare is not a single concept; rather it is any technological intervention that enables people with vulnerabilities to live more independently and with less intervention. It does not replace face-to-face contact with professionals where that contact serves a purpose beyond checking. Rather it allows resources to be used more meaningfully by freeing the time spent on pure monitoring to provide more creative service delivery.

Much of what is now called Telecare has been available for many years. Even such things as use of telephone welfare checks represent a Telecare intervention. At the lowest level Telecare can be as simple as stand-alone automatic nightlights to reduce the risk of falls. Telecare also includes community alarms - used individually as a "dispersed alarm" and universally provided in existing sheltered housing services. There are currently 7 providers of community alarms in Torbay however most of these provisions are passive and do not offer the range of potential options available.

Telecare provisions can also include more complex detectors and or monitors (for example, motion or fall detectors, overflow and gas monitors) often linked to community alarm systems. Telecare provisions have become increasingly sophisticated in recent years and at the very highest end of the technology range 'intelligent' monitoring can 'learn' behavioural patterns and trigger alerts when patterns change. The Department of Health's Guidance 'Building Telecare in England' envisages a broad scope of equipment and services which includes community alarm systems and vital signs monitoring (eg blood pressure checks).

Telecare offers significant opportunities that were previously unavailable to enabling people to remain independent within their chosen environment. Much of what is included in Telecare is outside the funding remit of Supporting People, however, the integration of Telecare packages will be a key component of single assessment of care and support and will help address:

- Safety and security in the home
- Falls
- Physical/sensory disability issues
- Monitoring and caring for dementia patients
- Welfare checks linked to calls systems
- Links to call out services such as the Care service

These services should be assessed on need, rather than provided as a standard provision and will be included in the single assessment development process.

There is increasing access and funding for new telecare technology and the Torbay Care Trust Telecare Project has been set up to promote the benefits of the range of telecare options.

There is a need to further identify ways to increase the range of new technology for people including those suffering from dementia and other forms of mental illness.

Home Improvement Service (HIS)

The Home Improvement service forms a significant element within the provision of a network of services responding to need and its work clearly links to Housing Related Support services. Home Improvement Agencies are historically eligible for funding under supporting people. However, the Torbay Council Home Improvement Service is not Supporting People funded.

The service is currently provided in-house by Torbay Council's Housing Services Team and offers services to both Adults and Children. This arrangement was made to allow consideration of wider options for service delivery. Torbay Council has recognised the importance of continuing to provide a Home Improvement Service and the current service will be extended for two years from April 2007.

Recent customer feedback confirms that a sample of 17 individuals stated that their adaptation enabled them to remain independent in their own home. Torbay Care Trust have identified that this would equate to a cost of £250,000 pa for that number of individuals to be placed in long term residential care.

The extension to the duration of this service will create the opportunity to develop closer working relationships with and the provision of adaptations to properties owned by Registered Social Landlords. The Older Persons Strategy Sub Group will lead on agreeing the shape and future of this service.

The Home Improvement Service will need to be linked into the single assessment process for support services and should form part of the wider network of services for People. Work is needed to ensure this happens and should form part of the Older Persons Strategy Sub Group work plan.

There is also potential for re-commissioning this service in line with a Devon-wide contract provision. However, this development option is still in the early stages and limited performance information is available date.

Planned Actions

- Identify ways to increase the range and use of new technology for people in their homes, including those suffering from dementia and other forms of mental illness.
- Ensure the Home Improvement Service is linked into the single assessment process for support services and is part of the wider network of services for People.
- Ensure the Older Persons Strategy Sub Group leads on agreeing the shape and future of the Home Improvement service.
- Assess the benefits of contributing to a Devon wide jointly commissioned service

8.3 Improve Partnership working,

To maintain their independence and good quality of life people need access to affordable, well-maintained and adaptable housing. They also need to be able to access a variety of services including transport, amenities such as shops and leisure and learning activities as well as health and personal care services in times of illness. They also need to feel safe and secure within their home and neighbourhood.

People are therefore affected by the raft of strategies in place by local authority services, as are all sectors of the population. However within this, people need to be seen as having additional concerns and their needs should therefore be addressed specifically within these strategies.

There is a need for better joined up working between the Care Trust and Housing, to be effective, services need to link together at a strategic level and all stakeholders, including service users should be involved. Joint working tends to be focussed around specific projects. There is a lack of general understanding of what is provided by each service, therefore a joint mapping exercise should be undertaken to look at

areas of possible duplication or where staffing roles could be changed to provide more effective, efficient and holistic services. Once this is done work is needed to ensure services are joined up as far as possible within current structures.

It is proposed that the implementation of this strategy be co-ordinated and monitored by the Older Person's Strategy Sub-Group (OPSSG) which in turn reports to Supporting People Commissioning Body (CB) and Torbay's Older Person's Partnership Board (TOPPB). A member of the Older Persons' Partnership Board will be included in the membership of the OPSSG to provide a link to that body. Strategy monitoring will involve assessment of progress against all aspects of the strategy and an annual review of the strategy to ensure its continued relevance.

Services will be jointly commissioned that integrate care and support and link with wider community resources; actively involve stakeholders and service users in the decision making process; and provide flexibility to meet changing needs and deliver choice around housing.

Planned Actions

- Improve the effectiveness and operation of the Older Person Strategy Sub Group (OPSG) to become the driving force to delivering the necessary changes.
- Bring together providers and other stakeholders to deliver the action arising out of this strategy.
- Map services provided across all agencies to ensure duplication is removed and clarity around services that are provided.
- Ensure that all stakeholders have been involved in the process before commissioning of any services.

8.4 Meet individual needs

Some people face additional obstacles in getting access to services due to sight, hearing and mobility problems. People from ethnic minority groups may also face language barriers and may perceive information is not relevant to their needs. It is important that services reach these more vulnerable groups.

The Black and minority ethnic (BME) population in Torbay is small, but growing. Little is known of the housing related support needs within the range of BME populations in Torbay; further work is needed to see if specific targeted services are needed. However, Torbay services must meet the needs of the diverse population and work within a remit of individually focused support that addresses the needs of service users within an appropriate cultural framework.

All services are expected to integrate this remit into their processes and work towards ensuring that the needs of individuals living in diverse circumstances are met. Services will be required to undertake Equalities Impact Assessments and to actively engage with minority populations including (BME) and Lesbian, Gay, Bi-sexual and Transsexual (LGBT) communities to ensure their approaches take account of and welcome the needs of individuals living in these communities.

During the period of this strategy there may be a need for services specifically designed around specialist needs but these would be considered firstly on the basis that most support needs should be able to be integrated within broader service deliveries.

It is recognised that the profile of staff working in sheltered services is predominantly white. Opportunities to involve people in service planning should ensure that there is diverse representation and special attention should be given to inviting representation from the main ethnic groups.

There is still little current research on the needs of gay and lesbian people. However, in a report by Polari (an independent organisation, set up to advocate for better services for older lesbian and gay men) offer 2 personal experiences of sheltered housing. They state in this research project, there was little recognition that the emphasis schemes have on group living can actually exclude minorities if positive action is not taken:

- Jean (66), East Midlands is quoted as follows: 'In the [sheltered] accommodation I live in, nobody knows I am a lesbian. They mustn't. It is so gossipy and they pick on anybody who is different. It makes me very lonely.'
- Simon (78), Sussex: 'I went for an interview for sheltered accommodation and I was informed that it was a house rule that every morning at 10.30 a.m. all the residents have coffee together and tell each other what they did the day before. Well, they wouldn't want to know! So I took a flat in the private sector at £160 per week which has the mobility standards I need. I'm paying for it out of my life savings.'

All front line staff working in housing related support service should have training in the needs of people from different faith and ethnic backgrounds.

Planned Actions

- Formulate a clearer picture of the needs of the minority communities in Torbay.
- Ensure all sheltered housing staff attend training on working with older BME and LGBT people.
- Ensure literature and publicity material about housing related support services promotes inclusiveness.
- Ensure frontline staff are fully trained in cultural and religious diversity and that action is taken to increase staff diversity.

8.5 Improve Information and advice services

There is a wide range of housing, health and social care services available for people in Torbay, to enable them to remain living in their own homes; the system is complex with overlapping services provided by various agencies. There is a danger that some people living alone may not receive any because they do not see their GP

or other healthcare professional. Therefore they remain outside this network of services. Work is needed to ensure that those not accessing services are able to gain information on what services may be of help to them.

People have needs that may require solutions from a variety of agencies and it can be difficult to know where to go to get advice that meets all their needs. It is only when people have good information that they can make independent choices about what they want. We need to make sure that information about services is easily available to all regardless of where they are living.

Sources of information include family, friends, carers, and professionals with whom they have regular contact e.g. home care staff, sheltered housing staff and day care workers. It is necessary to find information easily about what is available and how to refer a person to the most appropriate service.

The referral hub will help in providing an informed central access point for services. This service should work closely with the Torbay Advice Network, to ensure access to any support service will be straightforward.

Planned Actions

- Work with Torbay Advice Network to provide a single point of access for information and referral to services.
- Ensure the Referral Hub is integrated into the network of advice.
- Ensure that information about services is easily available to all regardless of where they are living, in a format that is appropriate to individual needs.

8.6 Involve People in Decision Making

Traditional Commissioning has often led to a divide between the consumer (the service user) and the producer (providers) that affects the ability of service users to demand services that genuinely respond to their needs. The recent direction offered by the government (Independence, Well-being & Choice; Our Health, Our Care, Our Say) make much of putting the decision making as close to the user as possible and support people to remain active participants in their communities with care close to home.

People have a huge amount to offer their communities particularly in terms of time and experience. People should not be seen as mere recipients of services but as active citizens who are well able to say what they want and how this should be provided.

Ageism in the provision of services needs to be recognised. One way to challenge ageist attitudes within services is to ensure the involvement of people.

There are also barriers for people wanting to get involved in the planning and delivery of services. Some of these are practical such as transport or disability needs but some are about a lack of understanding of the issues and a lack of confidence in the ability to change things.

The vision in Torbay is for strategic partnerships that put service user involvement at the centre to plan the service provisions and network, influence commissioning and ultimately set the local commissioning agenda. These partnerships will need to represent a wide range of views and include members who are able to champion needs related to diversity amongst service users.

There are currently a number of ways people can get involved in the way housing and housing related services are delivered.

- Residents of sheltered housing, or general needs social housing can get involved through their own organisations tenant participation structures.
- the Care Trust have patient panels
- there is service user representation on the Older People Strategy sub group and the older person board, although it is recognised that improvements are needed to make involvement more meaningful.

However, these groups only involve some older people and may exclude the most vulnerable.

Services need to ensure they promote an empowering rather than dependency culture. Staff should work with service users to encourage peer group support and to run social activities, set up a residents association etc.

Planned Actions

- All services should undertake an impact assessment of the barriers preventing people being involved in decision making forums with a view to removing those barriers where possible.
- Improve service user involvement in the Older People Strategy sub group and the older person board to make involvement more meaningful.
- Identify ways to encourage wider involvement in decision making.
- Ensure Providers are promoting an empowering rather than dependency culture within their services.

7. Ensuring delivery of the strategy

The action plan at Appendix one identifies the key actions from the planned actions identified within the strategy. The officers responsible for carrying out the actions are identified along with the expected completion date.

Progress against this plan will be monitored by OPSSG and in turn the OP Board and the Supporting People Commissioning Body.

The Council will seek out views of people if changes are made so that the effectiveness of the actions taken can be evaluated.