Developing a Strategic Approach to Housing for Older People

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Central Bedfordshire Council
About Central Bedfordshire

Population: 280,000 (2017)
Households: 104,400 (2011)
73% owner occupied

Over half the population is rural

Generally fairly affluent

Major centres of population:
Leighton Linslade: 40,070
Dunstable: 37,880
Houghton Regis: 18,110
Flitwick: 13,180
Sandy: 12,210

Local Plan 2015-2035 identifies growth of 39,350 dwellings – an increase of over one third in the next 16 years.
Central Bedfordshire Council’s approach to housing and social care

• Understands the critical contribution that housing makes to health and wellbeing
• Considers the whole market – not just those needing public support.
• Addressing the entire continuum from general needs housing to care and nursing homes.
• Keen to use Council land and other assets where appropriate and to maximum effect.
• Keen to engage with the market and to develop partnerships.
• Use most appropriate delivery model for circumstances.
Central Bedfordshire Council’s housing challenges – older people

- Ongoing need to support older people to remain at home
- Immediate need to replace existing care homes that were no longer fit for purpose
- Medium term need to deliver housing-with-care solutions as an alternative to residential care
- Longer term need to respond to demographic pressures of an older population with a range of housing solutions tied in with the growth agenda

Potential benefits throughout the system: *more appropriately housed people have a better quality of life and make less call on public services*
# Delivering Change with Housing-based Interventions – concepts and timescales

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Initiatives in Central Bedfordshire (1)

Tenancy Support and Housing Assistance

What it does:

• Supports tenants to avoid debt
• Supports tenants to access appropriate health and social care

Outcomes:

• Prevents breakdown of tenancies and avoids people becoming homeless.

Short-term / ongoing: part of prevention strategy
Initiatives in Central Bedfordshire (2)

Housing Support for Hospital Discharge

What it does:

• Provides dedicated housing service for people coming out of hospital
• Provides fast access to accommodation-based reablement, adaptations, assistive technology and specialist housing

Outcomes:

• Facilitates hospital discharge
• Avoids admissions to residential care

Short-term / ongoing: part of prevention strategy
Initiatives in Central Bedfordshire (3)

Development of new Housing-with-Care and Housing-with-Support schemes for older people

What it does:

• Provides new affordable specialist housing

Outcomes

• Diversion of people from residential care
• Better health outcomes for residents of schemes
• Reduced use of health facilities
• Lower care costs
• Frees up larger homes

Medium term: delivery is 3-5 years for each new scheme
Extra Care example – Priory View

- Developed and operated by Central Bedfordshire Council
- 83 one and two-bedroomed apartments
- Combination of affordable rental and shared ownership
- Onsite care and support available 24/7
- Associated communal facilities open to the public
- Opened April 2016
Development of Investment Prospectus for Accommodation for Older People

What it does:

• Sets out Central Bedfordshire’s aspirations in terms of accommodation for older people

Outcomes

• Seeks to attract investment into the council area...
• ...focussed on the types of accommodation that are most needed

Document available at: goo.gl/GJLnpC

Medium term
Chiltern Vale

Character: A mainly urban area including the towns of Dunstable and Houghton Regis along with the surrounding villages of Toddington, Caddington and Slip End. It is our most densely populated locality.

Population: From an overall population of 71,995 the numbers of those who are aged over 65 is 11,675. The graph below shows the population of older people in Chiltern Vale from 2015 to 2030.

![Population Graph]

Housing: There are 29,646 dwellings in Chiltern Vale. The tenure mix for households only occupied by people aged 65 is shown below.

- 78.2% owned
- 16.5% social rented
- 0.3% shared ownership
- 3% private rented
- 2% rent free

Developments: There are plans for town centre regeneration in Dunstable and Houghton Regis and around 12,000 new homes planned for Chiltern Vale up to 2035. Of this number the urban expansion areas to the north of Houghton Regis and Luton are expected to deliver 10,200 homes and associated infrastructure. Elsewhere settlement expansion is controlled by the Green Belt and despite its significant urban area the locality also benefits from beautiful countryside including the Dunstable Downs – part of the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

Two new care homes have recently opened in Dunstable. The Council has built an 83-apartment extra care scheme in Dunstable and plans to develop a further scheme in Houghton Regis.

In addition, McCarthy and Stone completed a scheme of 32 retirement units in Dunstable in 2014.

Other relevant plans and documents
- Dunstable Town Centre Masterplan
- Houghton Regis Town Centre Masterplan
- Houghton Regis North Framework Plan
- Land North of Luton and Sundon RFI Framework Plan
- Dunstable Strategic Delivery Framework
- Dunstable Delivery Management Plan
Extra Care Supply and Demand

The existing Council-owned extra care scheme at Red House Court in Houghton Regis was built in 1991 and provides 33 affordable rental flats. In addition the Council’s Priory View extra care scheme in Dunstable provides 83 new affordable apartments. A further scheme in Central Houghton Regis is planned for development before 2020. This will incorporate a redevelopment of Red House Court and deliver net an additional 140 affordable and open market apartments. These should meet forecast demand up to the period to 2030.

Market Opportunities in Chiltern Vale

Existing and planned extra care and care home developments will be sufficient to meet demand well into the next decade but there are opportunities to provide mainstream housing that meets the needs of older people in the urban extension areas and brownfield sites.

“Priory View in Dunstable is an 83-apartment affordable extra care scheme that was opened by the council in April 2016.”

Care Home Supply and Demand

There are currently 449 care home places in 12 homes. 42 of these places are in Greenacre which is owned by Central Bedfordshire Council. Dukeminter Court in Dunstable opened in April 2015 and has added 75 places. Rosewood Court in London Road, Dunstable opened in March 2016, providing an additional 66 places. It is planned that these two new homes are used to replace capacity in the two outdated Council-owned homes and to this end Caddington Hall closed in September 2015 reducing capacity by 42 places and Greenacre is due to close during 2016 reducing capacity by 42 places.

There is planning permission for a 58-place care home at Tithe Farm in Houghton Regis but this is not currently being pursued and has not been included in the supply forecast.
Initiatives in Central Bedfordshire (5)

Research into Housing Needs of Older People

What it does:

• Provides an evidence-base to determine the shape of new housing.
• Influences Local Plan policies to enable delivery of homes suitable for older people

Outcomes:

• Creates healthier, more inclusive, multigenerational communities

Long term: helps shape future communities
Research into the Housing Needs of Older People: Compiling an Evidence Base

Used national research:

- Future of an Ageing Population
- HAPPI 1, HAPPI 2, HAPPI 3, HAPPI 4
- Designing with Downsizers

Commissioned our own independent research in Central Bedfordshire with a representative sample of older people

- 600 short interviews
- 80 in-depth interviews
- Stakeholder focus groups
Key Research Areas

• Propensity to move
• Drivers for those considering a move
• Preferred tenure type
• Preferred housing types
• Downsizing

Full report published online at: goo.gl/P37QJ8
Propensity to Move

- Already Moved: 8%
- Planning to Move: 27%
- Not Planning but Prepared to Move: 25%
- Not Prepared to Move: 40%

Source: Assessment of the Housing Needs of Older People in Central Bedfordshire – ORS / Central Bedfordshire Council March 2017
Drivers for those planning or prepared to move

Most Important Factor When Choosing a Home

- Location 58%
- Design & Size 16%
- Facilities 13%
- Tenure & Cost 13%

Source: Assessment of the Housing Needs of Older People in Central Bedfordshire – ORS / Central Bedfordshire Council March 2017
Type of property preferred by those planning or prepared to move

- Bungalow: 61%
- House: 29%
- Apartment: 10%

Source: Assessment of the Housing Needs of Older People in Central Bedfordshire – ORS / Central Bedfordshire Council March 2017
Summary from the research

• Around half of the over-65 population is ‘Planning to Move’ or ‘Prepared to Move’
• Location the most important factor
  • Current location
  • Access to facilities
  • Access to social networks
• General preference for bungalows or houses over apartments
Implications

• Many older people have a desire to downsize...
• ...but is has to be the right product:
  • Location
  • Design
  • Price
  • Tenure
• If this is not available people will stay where they are
• But if we can meet demand with the right range of products then we can release at least 5,400 houses with 3 or more bedrooms
Influencing Planning Policy

As a result of this research we have proposed clear policies that:

• Define housing suitable for older people
• Require a percentage (23%) of any new development to be suitable for older people
• This increases to 100% for developments within existing settlements (with some caveats)
• Require larger developments to have suitable housing-with-care and/or housing-with-support schemes
Going Further - Promoting Innovation

• Acquire sites and or allocate existing sites in the Council’s ownership
• Deliver exemplar housing designs and schemes:
  • Low cost / high quality / high density
  • Unit-based designs – scalable solutions
  • Investigate benefits of using smarter construction methods
• Explore options for subsequent delivery at scale
• Continuing research and engagement with older people