

OLDER PEOPLE'S HOUSING STRATEGY MONITORING AND ADVISORY GROUP – Wednesday 13 December 2017: 1030 – 1230

Attendees:

Moira Bayne, Housing Options Scotland
Margaret Moore, ihub
Sheenagh Simpson, SFHA
Amanda Britain, TEC
Jonathan Fair, McCarthy and Stone
Robert Thomson, Care and Repair Scotland
Greig Henderson, Fife Council
Gillian Edwards, West Lothian Council
Jim Eadie, Age Scotland
Heather Noller, Carers Trust
Ashley Campbell, CIH
Glenda Watt, SOPA
Karen Mechan, Scottish Government
Anne-Marie Thomson, Scottish Government
Ruth Whatling, Scottish Government
Anne Grove, Scottish Government
Sarah Newton, Scottish Government
Catriona MacKean, Scottish Government
Angela O'Brien, Scottish Government (Chair)
Margaret Irving, Scottish Government (Minutes)

1. Welcome, introductions and apologies

Apologies were received from Julia Fitzpatrick, Horizon Housing Association; David Fotheringham, Scottish Government; Helen Murdoch, Hanover (Scotland) Housing Association; Nicola Dickie, COSLA; Lynn Leitch, Fife Council.

Angela informed the group of the sad news that Ronald Ritchie our Tenant Representative passed away earlier this month.

Angela welcomed new members and asked the minutes note thanks to the following members who have left the group - John Wood, COSLA; Marian Reid, CIH; Steve Wiseman, McCarthy & Stone; Ian Glover, Scottish Government and Hannah Davidson, Scottish Government.

2. Minutes of last meeting (22 June 2017)

The group were asked for any final comments to the Minutes from the previous meeting. Glenda noted that her apology for the previous meeting had not been recorded. Post meeting note - This has now been corrected. The minutes will be added to the Scottish Government web pages.

3. Monitoring Report presentation

Sarah Newton and Ruth Whatling gave a presentation covering the performance of the Older People's Housing Strategy over the last year. This included population trends, housing indicators, health indicators and strategic activity. Key points included:

- Proposed fuel poverty definitions include the age that is a proxy for vulnerability to be increased from 60 to 75.
- Decrease in adults assessing general health as good.
- Adult mental health results for Age 65-74 is stable and better than the all adults figure. Those over 75 years were comparable to all adults.
- Delayed discharge figures have improved slightly.
- An increase in the number of falls at home – perhaps a consequence of more people living at home.

The group then had a wider discussion covering the following areas.

An independent evaluation of the Adapting for Change (AfC) test sites was published at the end of September. The report made a number of recommendations to Government and other stakeholders. At a practical level work is continuing to embed good practice within the pilot areas and beyond. We will be seeking Ministers' views on next steps and are planning a roundtable session with key stakeholders early in the New Year. We will keep the group updated on progress.

Margaret Moore said that the iHub is organising a national event to reflect on the learning from the 5 Adapting for Change demonstration sites. The provisional date is 23 March 2018 and more information will be provided in the New Year.

Action The link to the AfC report and summary document will be circulated along with a copy of the Monitoring presentation and report.

The Help to Adapt pilot ended in March 2017 and while the take up was not as high as expected, it worked very well for those who took the equity loan and feedback was very positive. Link are working on a report that will set out key findings in respect of the pilot. We are considering whether there is scope to include an adaptations element to other SG equity loan schemes. We will be clearer about the scope for this following the conclusion of the Home Energy Efficiency Programmes (HEEPS) Equity Loan pilot.

Moira advised that Housing Options Scotland were about to do some social research on the psychology of people and their homes. Glenda mentioned that Action on Elder Abuse is looking at inheritance and power of attorney.

Glenda noted that a decrease in the number of social care staff in local authorities needs to be addressed to prevent problems with delayed discharge. Angela said that while care packages are sometimes the reason for delayed discharge it is not always the case. Work has been done on the role of housing in reducing delayed discharge e.g. rehousing, adaptations etc.

Angela thanked Sarah and Ruth for a very useful presentation.

4. Age, Home and Community – The First Five Years

The review was published on 30 October. As we expected this wasn't picked up in the media but the intention was always to have more of a focus on the refreshed strategy. The group had no further comments.

5. Age, Home and Community –The Next Phase

Angela highlighted some of the key points for the refreshed strategy. There have been lots of changes since 2011. We also recognise that age is not necessarily what defines the ability to live independently at home.

Jim asked about reporting on existing actions. The refreshed strategy will be supported by a detailed delivery plan. All of the continuing actions from the original strategy will be included within the delivery plan.

Margaret M said there should be more about older people as an asset and the contribution they make to society especially in communities and building resilience (particularly as carers but also in other roles) and highlight that older people are not a homogenous group. Agreed that there is a need for coherent advice services that are easy for older people to access.

Glenda agreed, saying that there is potential for older people living longer supported by various initiatives and technology so this should be celebrated and put in more positive terms.

The Strategy mentions dementia but the group felt strongly that we also need to have a specific and separate mention of general mental health issues among older people.

Improving Self-directed support take up which is not as high as it could be was raised. Glenda mentioned that Minority Ethnic Carers of People (MECOP) is doing some work on Self Directed support.

Amanda said existing connections between housing and health and social care and work underway to further improve these should be highlighted. In particular there are a number of primary care reform agendas it would be useful to align the Strategy to.

Amanda noted that the 50,000 new homes (within the current SG affordable homes target) are being built to high standards which should mean there are more houses in future suitable for adaptation. Future proofing the housing stock was identified as an important issue. SG is currently looking again at Housing for Varying Needs design guide for affordable homes.

With fewer care homes operating and pressures on funding for housing support services, what is the future role for specialist housing? Angela said the LHS guidance will be updated in 2018 and planning for housing for people with particular needs will be reviewed.

The strategy should recognise there is a need to plan for future trends, in particular the growth of the private rented sector which may mean that fewer people become owners in the longer term.

Jonathan noted Help to Buy for older people will offer a new option for some owners at the lower end of the market.

Jim Eadie said he liked the feel of the draft strategy and noted the importance of linking to other SG strategies.

Fiona said that West Lothian Council works hard to make best use of its housing stock but recognises this needs to be changed. Putting the tenant at the heart of the process is a good idea, but tenants can sometimes require support to identify what they want or need. Ground floor properties should be accessible but these flats are not for all.

Angela noted that some social landlords offer housing health checks to tenants. Fiona noted this is time-consuming but good for future planning. It would also be helpful if tenants notify housing providers if their circumstances change.

Moira pointed out that if an owner goes to RSL looking for housing, they are generally classed as housed. More needs to be done to share information on available stock.

Amanda said that sheltered housing stock is being affected by the move to digital. The strategy should consider attitudes and barriers to digital and how these can be overcome. Use the strategy to showcase opportunities.

Ashley acknowledged there are housing needs and some will find it difficult to navigate what is available. Recognise that not everyone will need advice but some older people find it difficult and overwhelming and just don't make any decisions. Important to make sure GP's know that there is a housing solution and the pathways to refer people.

The Scottish Fire and Rescue House in Cambuslang is a very good resource and work with other services, such as Care and repair. They are in a position of being trusted by homeowners and able to assess any vulnerability to falls or other issues when they visit. However, looking out for issues is everyone's responsibility.

Angela asked the group if any members were prepared to offer supportive quotes to be included in the strategy document. General or specific to particular areas. Send to Margaret by end of first week in January.

Other comments included the strategy should have more mention of place and Glenda pointed out that page 3 of draft should say assembly, not parliament.

If there are any other comments please send them by the end of the first week in January.

6. Updates

Health update – a written update will be sent to the group following the meeting.

Safe staffing – likely that legislation will be in place next year for nurses and midwives and extended to housing support services that are registered with the care inspector.

i-hub has new portfolio lead Ruth Robin, currently working with Shelter. Amanda and Margaret will still be involved.

Glenda mentioned that SOPA were holding an event in April and we will circulate details when they are available.

7. Any other business

No additional items.

8. Date of next meeting

Next meeting takes place in May/June 2018, unless there is a need to have an extraordinary meeting before the refreshed strategy is published.

Housing and Independent Living
January 2017