

Meeting the challenge of Older People's Housing

The number of older people in the UK is increasing sharply, as is the expectation of independence in old age. These two factors combine to generate demand for more and different housing.

We can assist you with: Older Peoples' housing strategies, Options appraisals of existing sheltered housing, Extra Care Housing, developing new service models for older people, demands and supply research, and responding to changes in Supporting People funding.

Housing Policy

Since the 2008 cross-government report *Lifetime Homes, Lifetime Neighbourhoods* there have been moves to increase the options available to older people, alongside promoting independence.

There has been significant investment in new models of provision, particularly Extra Care housing, and in other ways of promoting independence, such as assistive technology.

In the current economic climate cost is a significant driver in the provision of services. However, this does not necessarily conflict with promoting independence. For example, it has been argued that Extra Care housing achieves an overall cost saving by reducing the need for hospital admissions and speeding up hospital discharges.

Extra care housing, floating support and continuing care retirement communities are each gaining ground because of their potential for meeting the needs of older people in new ways. In addition many older people are living in housing unsuitable for their needs and, whilst much sheltered housing remains popular, some of it is of poor quality or simply outdated and no longer fit for purpose. This needs to be remodelled or replaced.

Reductions in Supporting People (SP) funding, at the same time as the removal of the "ring fence" (so that local authorities are no longer obliged to spend their allocation of SP funding only on SP programmes), have driven most authorities to re-examine how their programmes will operate in the future. Providers are being called upon to find innovative and cost effective methods of supporting older people and promoting independence.



Extra Care Housing

Extra Care housing schemes, a relatively recent model of provision, have been defined as 'developments that comprise self-contained homes with design features and support services available to enable self-care and independent living'. Schemes have been developed in a wide range of sizes, forms and tenure. However, they share certain key characteristics:

- ◆ They house some of the oldest and frailest people in society
- ◆ They offer some people a more flexible alternative to residential care
- ◆ They provide additional facilities, such as shop, hairdresser and restaurant, in addition to those generally provided in sheltered schemes
- ◆ They have the potential to generate cost savings, for example by reducing hospital admissions
- ◆ They require a new and more intensive management approach, involving higher numbers of staff, dedicated operational policies and partnership working with agencies and providers.

Older people's housing strategies

The key strategic aims for older peoples' housing will be focussed around ensuring that older people have the housing and support they need to live full lives in their local community. A key factor in enabling them to live as independently as possible will be the effective integration of housing, care and health services.

Housing strategies will incorporate the following:

- ◆ The national strategic context (as set out in *Lifetime Homes*, *Lifetime Neighbourhoods* and elsewhere)
- ◆ The regional and local strategic and policy context
- ◆ Demographics (current and forecast)
- ◆ Analysis of demand (by tenure, scheme type, unit size)
- ◆ Analysis of supply (including underoccupation)
- ◆ Identification of capital and revenue funding sources
- ◆ An action plan, with clear timescales, targets and responsibilities

Existing Housing for Older People

Time and again we find that current older residents love the specially designed homes they live in. However, that does not always mean that these homes are attractive to new applicants. Keeping a sheltered housing scheme modern and fit for purpose requires passionate people skills, great service delivery and a bricks and mortar environment that is up to present day expectations. Sheltered housing with bedsits, or with shared kitchens and bathrooms, no longer meet most people's aspirations. The cost of providing on-site resident staff can make smaller schemes uneconomic. Landlords need to keep their housing for older people under regular review, monitoring satisfaction and applications (including the time it takes to re-let different property types in different localities). New methods of service delivery, including assistive technology, can make all the difference.

Supporting People Funding

As Supporting People (SP) funding becomes ever scarcer, commissioners are re-tendering their programmes. They expect providers to submit innovative responses, which take account of eligibility issues, the potential for new and different service models and the requirement for cost effective delivery. In some cases the support will no longer be provided by the landlord. There is increasing interest in "hub and spoke" models, where scheme based staff also provide housing related support to the wider neighbourhood. There are also moves towards "personalisation", where individual recipients have more say about the support service they need and who should provide it.



What Trimmer CS has to offer you in Older Peoples' Housing

Trimmer CS is widely recognised as a specialist in the field of housing based care and support for older people. We have undertaken four extra care housing research projects for the **Department of Health**, examining private rented provision, contracting arrangements, nominations agreements and markets. These resulted in good practice guidance published through the 'Housing Learning and Improvement Network'. We have also carried out studies into sheltered and extra care housing for older people on behalf of local authorities and housing associations. Our training events in this area are well supported by councils, housing associations and commissioning bodies.

Older Peoples' Housing Strategies

Trimmer CS can support you to produce an older peoples' housing strategy which is tailored to local circumstances, but which also reflects local, regional and national strategic aims and priorities. Our services include:

- ◆ Carrying out a strategic review of existing service provision for older people
- ◆ Assessing and mapping supply and demand
- ◆ Sensitive and appropriate facilitation of stakeholder consultation
- ◆ Drafting a new strategy for older people and/or extra care housing
- ◆ Reviewing performance against an existing strategy

Supporting People Programmes

Trimmer CS has a good understanding of the Supporting People (SP) funding stream, and the challenges facing SP commissioning bodies, providers and those in receipt of SP. Our services include:

- ◆ Reviewing national and regional trends in SP funding
- ◆ Reviewing eligibility criteria
- ◆ Supporting stakeholder consultation
- ◆ Advising on service design to meet SP funding opportunities
- ◆ Project managing procurement exercises
- ◆ Assisting with tender submissions



Reviewing and remodelling existing Older Peoples' Housing

We can help you make the best use of your existing older peoples' housing and take decisions (which can be both complex and difficult) about whether it remains fit for purpose or should be remodelled. Our services include:

- ◆ Carrying out options appraisals of existing sheltered housing schemes and care homes. This will include stakeholder workshops, cost benefit analysis and outline designs.
- ◆ Undertaking demand and supply analysis
- ◆ Assisting you in identifying and developing appropriate models of housing, care and support
- ◆ Developing service delivery models
- ◆ Preparing funding bids for remodelling or replacement

Developing Extra Care Housing

We can support you to develop new extra care housing which meets the needs and aspirations of older people. Our services include:

- ◆ Analysis of supply. This will include an analysis of comparable accommodation locally.
- ◆ Analysis of demand. This will take in current and projected demographics, as well as other evidence such as lettings data and tenant surveys.
- ◆ Site assessment. This will cover aspects such as physical characteristics, planning constraints, location, accessibility of services and proximity to other schemes.
- ◆ Developing design briefs for extra care housing
- ◆ Preparing funding bids
- ◆ Supporting the establishment of partnership and contracting frameworks
- ◆ Developing service delivery models, including care
- ◆ Advice on a whole range of policies and procedures, including the implications of the Mental Capacity Act
- ◆ Assistance with the project management of proposed and new schemes.

Stock Rationalisation

Trimmer CS can work with you as landlord to find a new operator, should you decide to withdraw from a specific supported or older person's housing scheme. This might arise if you are re-focussing your geographic areas of operation and/or client groups. In some cases we have acted for small charities who find themselves unable to continue with existing schemes and are seeking partners to protect residents' interests and make best use of the built assets. Our services include:

- ◆ Assessing the future of individual schemes
- ◆ Identifying the potential for stock rationalisation
- ◆ Preparing a prospectus which sets out details of the current operation
- ◆ Researching other providers and seeking expressions of interest
- ◆ Analysing the expressions of interest
- ◆ Project managing the rationalisation process
- ◆ Assisting with applying for regulatory consents where required.



Established in 1998, **Trimmer CS** is an independent consultancy dedicated to working in the social housing sector.

We provide consultancy, training and interim management services throughout the UK to housing associations, local authorities, ALMOs as well as social housing contractors and developers.