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| Report title | Review of the Older Persons Strategy |
| Report author | Andy Vincent, Corporate Head of Housing |
| Department | Housing |
| Exempt? | No |
| Exemption type | Not applicable |
| Reasons for exemption | Not applicable |

Purpose of report:
To recommend to a committee

Synopsis of report:

The Housing Services Older Persons Strategy was approved by Runnymede Borough Council’s Housing Committee in September 2021.

The aims of the strategy are as follows: -

- 1. First class older persons accommodation with modern facilities, that is highly sought after.**
- 2. High quality onsite support promoting independence, tackling isolation, and maximising resident’s health and wellbeing.**
- 3. A clear pathway into older persons accommodation with assistance where required.**
- 4. A partnership with Surrey County Council’s Adult Social Care services to ensure residents receive the ‘right’ care services where they are required.**
- 5. Accommodation outside of Independent Retirement Living that meets the needs of older people.**

Resources have been identified to support the implementation of the strategy.

The strategy includes an action plan to ensure its delivery. An update against the action plan is included in Appendix 1 within this report.

Recommendation

Members are asked to note the progress in delivering the Housing Services Older Persons Strategy

1. Context and background of report

1.1 Older people are a key constituency to whom the Housing Service provide services.

Many older people have been tenants of Runnymede Borough Council for a considerable length of time.

| Property Type | TENANTS OVER 65 | | TENANTS 65 & UNDER | |
|---------------|-------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------|-----------------------------------|
| | Number of Tenants | Average Length of Tenancy (years) | Number of Tenants | Average Length of Tenancy (years) |
| General Needs | 654 | 30 | 1,887 | 11 |
| IRL | 165 | 8 | 37 | 3 |
| Both GN & IRL | 819 | 25 | 1,924 | 11 |

1.2 Housing services specifically for older people are largely provided in the form of Independent Retirement Living accommodation and support.

Support for older people is also provided to assist households where appropriate to downsize into Independent Retirement Living accommodation (a link to the Moving with Support Policy is provided here [Housing policies – Runnymede Borough Council](#))

1.3 Some general needs (GN) accommodation has been designated for older people. It is essential that this accommodation and the communities in which they are located are appropriate and work is undertaken to minimise the potential for a 'clash of lifestyle' with other age groups.

2. Aims of the Housing Service Older Persons Strategy

2.1 The following aims are articulated within the Housing Service - Older Persons Strategy: -

1. First class older persons accommodation with modern facilities, that is highly sought after.
2. High quality onsite support promoting independence, tackling isolation, and maximising resident's health and wellbeing.
3. A clear pathway into older persons accommodation with assistance where required.
4. A partnership with Surrey County Council's Adult Social Care services to ensure residents receive the 'right' care services where they are required.
5. Accommodation outside of Independent Retirement Living that meets the needs of older people.

2.2 The strategy sets out an action plan for delivery of the above aims. Progress against these aims is reported back to the Housing Committee annually. Appendix 1 identifies the actions within the plan and progress against each.

3. Consultation

3.1 Extensive consultation with a host of stakeholders on the proposed vision contained within the strategy was undertaken in July and August 2021.

Further engagement has been undertaken with residents on designs for the refreshed accommodation – further sessions are planned for January 2024.

4. Policy Framework Implications

4.1 Housing Service Area Plan 2021/22:

| | | | |
|-----|---|---|--|
| H12 | Development of an Older Persons Strategy looking at the Council's Housing Assets and Support Services | Corporate Head of Housing Head of Housing & Business Planning Head of Housing Technical Services Housing Services Manager Community Services | Review the future of the existing IRL schemes to ensure they remain viable. The communal areas of IRL schemes are improved – dementia issues are addressed. Digital alarm call systems introduced. Floating support services with digital support plans |
|-----|---|---|--|

5. Resource implications

5.1 Resources have been identified to support the implementation of this strategy. The refreshed Housing Asset Management Plan 2021-2026 identifies the following to support the strategy.

“To support this strategy £1.7m has been identified within the Housing Revenue Account Business Plan over the next 5 years to support the enhancement of facilities within Independent Retirement Living and the upgrading of alarm call systems (including enabling a switchover to digital calling which will be required by 2025).”

6. Legal implications

6.1 There are many legal requirements placed upon social landlords in undertaking their landlord function. Additional requirements are placed on landlords who deliver support services to older people. These are set out in the Part 1 of Care Act 2014 which places an emphasis on Local Authorities to seek to prevent the need for the provision of care and support to ‘vulnerable’ people and the Local Government Act

2000 which launched the supporting people regime and many of the current practices around the provision of support to 'vulnerable' people.

7. Equality implications

- 7.1 An Equalities Impact Assessment of the potential impact of the Housing Services – Older Persons Strategy has been undertaken to demonstrate the positive impact the introduction of the strategy on inclusivity and accessibility.

8. Environmental/Sustainability/Biodiversity implications

- 8.1 The impact of the Older Persons Strategy will be to improve the physical environment in and around Runnymede Borough Council's Independent Retirement Living accommodation. It will facilitate an upgrading of the alarm call equipment within our Independent Retirement Living accommodation to ensure that it can make digital calls.
- 8.2 It has led to a modernisation of the support service and will ensure, where appropriate, support is in place to enable tenants/residents to downsize into Independent Retirement Living accommodation.
- 8.3 Plans are in place to upgrade the heating systems in two of the Council's Independent Retirement Living Schemes and to improve the energy performance of the accommodation.

9. Other implications

- 9.1 The consultation undertaken to compile and implement this strategy was undertaken in line with the Council's Consultation Strategy principles:
- A Consultations should have a clear purpose and start at an appropriate stage.
 - B Consultations should take account of the groups being consulted.
 - C Consultations should be clear and concise.
 - D Consultations should last for a proportionate amount of time.
 - E Responses to consultations should be published in a timely fashion and facilitate Scrutiny.

10. Conclusions

- 10.1 A Housing Services Older Persons Strategy was devised in 2021 setting out a plan for improving the physical environmental within Runnymede Borough Council's Independent Retirement Living accommodation and enhancing the support service for residents.
- 10.2 The purpose of this report is to update Housing Committee members on progress in delivering the strategy and to identify timescales for further enhancement work.

11. Background papers

Housing Committee Report in September 2021 approving the Housing Older Persons Strategy

democracy.runnymede.gov.uk/Data/Housing_Committee/20210908/Agenda/Agenda.pdf

Moving with Support Policy

[Housing policies – Runnymede Borough Council](#)

12. Appendix I Delivery Action Plan

Aim: *First class older persons accommodation with modern facilities, that is highly sought after*

Physical work to upgrade our Independent Retirement Living Accommodation will commence in the Spring 2024. Work is proceeding on the designs for the accommodation, consultation with tenants and procuring suitably qualified contractors.


Consultation with residents took place in May 2022 on initial designs; further consultation is planned for January 2024.

Below are some examples: -


2.0 CONCEPT - INTERIOR ENHANCEMENTS

2.1 Material Considerations

Wall Finishes: Redecorate throughout in accordance with the correct colour contrast LRV requirements for those who are visually impaired and to provide Dementia friendly environment. Develop a base palette which can be used throughout all future homes with the option of accent colours to help with wayfinding and orientation within the building based around the theme of nature. Applying an accent colour per wing provides identity and definition that residents can relate to. It can be limited in it's use to avoid becoming overbearing, but will provide wayfinding and landmark identity as to which wing you are in.




Feature Wall: Provides focus to a communal area by providing a feature wall with a textured wall covering and contained with a fireplace or display unit to give a central point in the space.




Floor Finishes: Upgrade to a modern luxury wood effect vinyl and suitable Dementia friendly carpets with consideration to providing suitable threshold profiles to reduce trips and falls.

Door Finishes: Remove dark doors and handrails and replace with a light timber finish to provide more of a domestic and warm feel. Bedroom doors can be painted to suit a colour theme and in accordance with the correct colour contrast LRV requirements for those who are visually impaired and to assist in providing Dementia friendly environment.






RIBA Stage 0 Report

Lighting Considerations: Proficient lighting should be provided if there is no natural light available. Spaces should be well lit with both overhead and wall lighting.



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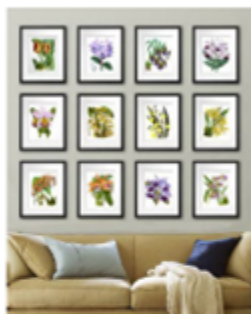
RIBA Stage 0 Report

2.2 Furniture Fixings and Equipment Considerations

Furniture: Using modern non institutional chairs, tables and display units will provide a classic timeless aesthetic to communal areas. Selected upholstery fabrics should be robust and easily cleanable with the correct fire ratings for use in a communal setting which are appealing and tactile for residents to enjoy.



Textiles: Provide soft furnishings and window treatments which are robust and suitably selected to be Dementia friendly in terms of patterning and textures but equally adding to the feel of a modern and interesting interior.



Artwork: Provide points of interest and meaningful reminiscence in communal areas and along any long stretches of corridors. Ensure this is done without creating a cluttered feel including providing pictures and artwork to create focal points within display units or open shelving. Themes can work well and are easily changeable if quick release frames are purchased. Consider themes such as local history/places of interest or nature and seasons.

Signage: Develop a clear signage and way finding strategy which includes

- Pictorial interpretation of room usage
- Large bold text
- Good contrast between lettering and background
- Fixed to door rather than wall
- Fixed at lower height of 1.2m



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Aim: High quality onsite support promoting independence, tackling isolation, and maximising resident's health and wellbeing

A review of the support planning documentation is complete. The new support planning IT module has also been introduced. This system will generate significant efficiencies in the provision of housing related support – and will reduce the need to hold sensitive information locally.

Publicity material, including a tenant's scheme handbook has been reviewed, plus the Independent Retirement Living section of the RBC website has been refreshed.

<https://www.runnymede.gov.uk/help-find-home/independent-retirement-living>

A staff handbook is also complete, reflecting best practice within the industry.

An accreditation assessment (by EROSH) of the support provided in Independent Retirement Living took place week September 2022, resulting in the service receiving independent accreditation. A further assessment by EROSH of the service will be conducted in September 2023.

Aim: *A clear pathway into older persons accommodation with assistance where required*

Our Moving with Support Policy was presented to the September 2022 Housing Committee which details the support RBC will offer to older people wanting to move into Independent Retirement Living or into smaller accommodation.

Aim: *A partnership with Surrey County Council's Adult Care Services to ensure residents receive the 'right' care services where they are required*

The relationship with Surrey County Council Adult Care Services is improving. Meetings have been held with them to promote the Independent Retirement Living service at Runnymede Borough Council.

Further work is still required to document the process of moving on from Independent Retirement Living into Extra or Residential Care Accommodation although this is well underway.

Aim: *Accommodation outside of Independent Retirement Living that meets the needs of older people*

A Local Lettings Plan has been put in place to restrict access to some accommodation for older people. Additional sites will be identified; the needs of older people need to be balanced against the needs of all parts of the community.