



## **SUPPORTED HOUSING POLICY**

### **1. Policy Statement**

The Association is committed to meeting the needs of adults with different levels of support requirements to help them to maintain independent living.

This will be achieved through the provision of high quality accommodation and associated support services and a clear approach to the promotion of independent living

### **2. Policy Aims**

The Association will embrace its wider aspirations in building partnerships with communities and the attitude of staff towards older adults and those with support needs

The Association aims to be flexible and sensitive in responding to the complex individual circumstances of households applying for supported housing and in satisfying their housing preferences

The Association wishes to make the best use of its housing stock to meet the housing needs of households applying for housing and to provide quality accommodation at an affordable rent

Recognizing the benefits of sheltered and supported housing, the Association wishes to make it available only to those who are likely to benefit from the services offered, now or within the foreseeable future

The Association will work closely with other organizations to establish the level of need for supported housing accommodation and support services

The Association will work closely with tenants to encourage their active participation and the involvement of individuals in keeping with its Tenant Participation policy

In development of new accommodation the Association will aim to include sufficient housing, built to accessible standards, to meet the requirements of people with support needs, including those with physical disabilities, learning difficulties, mental health problems and younger adults at risk

In accordance with its Equality & Diversity and Vulnerability policies the Association also wishes to ensure that all applicants are treated fairly and that a consistent approach is adopted in processing their applications. All applicants will be treated in accordance with the Associations Customer Care Code.

### **3. Supporting People**

The purpose of the supporting people initiative is to bring together funding streams for support services into a single budget to be applied at a local level based upon the strategic priorities of Housing, Social Services, Health and Probation Services, to encourage the development of support services that can be delivered in ordinary housing as well as specialized schemes, such as sheltered housing, and to achieve the key aims and objectives of these organizations by ensuring that services:

- Adapt and respond appropriately to changing needs
- Enable people to maximize their independence
- Prevent unnecessary admission into institutions
- Help people in institutional care to move to a more independent and stable home
- Prevent crisis that can lead to homelessness and tenancy breakdown
- Contribute to balanced and sustainable communities

The implementation of this joint initiative provides a unique opportunity for close working between agencies to ensure there is a greater co-ordination in providing better integrated, whole-system services for vulnerable people, including older adults

The adoption of the “person-centered” approach in developing services will lead to more flexibility in service provision and the development of services which can provide appropriate levels of support to people in their own homes as well as to those in sheltered housing

Support staff will provide a flexible support service based on the requirements of each individual as set out in an agreed support plan, which will be regularly reviewed and that will be at the core of our service delivery. Staff will work with the individual, their family and any other carer to ensure that the maximum effective level of service is provided and that it meets the needs of those concerned. Staff will also provide advocacy, advice and support on security, health and safety matters

Support staff will work to the guidance provided in well prepared and regularly reviewed operational procedures which meet the standards required by the Quality Assessment Framework and are in place for the following areas of our work:

- Daily Procedures
- General Procedures
- Health & Safety Procedures
- Fire Procedures
- Emergency Procedures
- Needs Assessment & Support Planning

#### **4. Sheltered Housing**

The focus of sheltered housing is moving away from “housing for older people” towards:

- Specifically designed housing with support
- Extra - care sheltered housing for frail and disabled older people and those with specific needs, such as dementia, a learning disability or a history of homelessness.

The key factors defining sheltered housing from ordinary housing are that it is designed and built with older people in mind; is connected to an emergency alarm system and that it has the services of a scheme manager (supported housing officer).

The role of housing is now more generally recognized as being a major component of the preventative health agenda and sheltered housing in particular is valued for the way in which it promotes the continued health, independence and well being of older adults

Sheltered housing is now viewed by health and social care agencies to often be a more appropriate setting than residential care for very frail older people, particularly those with specific needs, such as mental illness or a learning disability

Sheltered housing also provides independent living units for a wide variety of older adults with support needs

## **5. Eligibility Criteria for Sheltered & Supported Housing**

Applicants for sheltered housing & supported housing will usually have a medical, physical, mental health or social support need and require some help from support staff to live independently

An assessment process for sheltered housing or supported accommodation should endorse approval:

### **Sheltered Accommodation:**

- Support levels should include a requirement for several visits per week and applicants would benefit from the social activities available
- Or have a different level of support need e.g. life skills support for people with mild learning difficulties

### **Supported Accommodation:**

- A lower level of support need such as a monthly visit
- Or have a different level of support need e.g. life skills support for people with mild learning difficulties

## **6. Extra Care Sheltered Housing**

Extra care housing offers another choice to the individual; a choice based on security, rights and control. The tenancy maintains autonomy with all the support that may be expected in a residential care setting. By offering this further choice to people who have accommodation and care needs the Association is underpinning its values of putting people first, respecting and valuing their choices and independence.

Working in partnership with Social Services and Care agencies, the Association will seek to provide care services for more frail adults in order to assist with daily living skills, ensuring options and informed choices are available to individuals for them to remain independent and well supported.

### **Eligibility Criteria for Extra Care Housing:**

- Applicants will generally be over the age of 55
- Priority will generally be given to applicants at risk of being placed in a residential care or nursing care setting, but where they have the ability to live independently within an extra care housing environment

## **7. Community Alarms / Mobile Support Service**

Advances made to the technology available reduce the necessity of older adults having to move to sheltered housing. By increasing the use of dispersed alarms, embracing Telecare technology and providing a dedicated monitoring and mobile responding service many older adults and adults with support needs, of all tenures, will be able to live independently within their own homes for much longer.

The Association will work in close partnership with an accredited call centre to ensure prompt monitoring of any emergency calls, appropriate response and reassurance to customers within acceptable time limits.

The Alarm unit and associated equipment provides reassurance and peace of mind that help is on hand in an emergency situation. The floating support service provided monitors the health & welfare of individuals, provides advice, advocacy and referral mechanisms to promote and maintain independent living

## **8. Younger People with Support Needs**

The Association provides accommodation in general housing properties for younger adults with a variety of support needs and is committed to close partnership working with recognized support agencies that have the skills and knowledge to support individuals with everyday living skills. Referrals are made to the appropriate agency, with the consent of the individual, so that support planning can be agreed and be in place from the commencement of tenancies.

General needs housing officers are involved in the monitoring of these tenancies and the support provided by our partnered agencies.