

5. Improve information and advice services

In Torbay, there is a wide range of housing, health and social care services available to enable older people to live independently in their chosen home. The current system is highly complicated, with many agencies providing overlapping services. There is also a high risk that some older people may not receive any services since they have limited contact with people who would be able to refer them to a suitable service.

We plan to:

- work with Torbay Advice Network to provide single points of access for information and referral to services
- ensure the Supporting People Referral HUB is integrated into the network of advice
- ensure that information about services is easily available to all, regardless of where they live.

6. Involve older people in decision making

Older people have the potential to make significant contributions to their communities, particularly in terms of time and life experience. People First intends that older people should not be viewed solely as people who receive services. They should be seen as active citizens who are able to say what they want and how this should be provided. Ageism in the delivery of services needs to be recognised. The way to challenge ageist attitudes within services is to ensure the involvement of older people.

We plan to:

- work with all our housing and support services to undertake an assessment of the barriers which prevent older people becoming involved in decision making
- remove the barriers which are identified
- improve service user involvement in the design and delivery of the Housing and Support Strategy
- identify ways to encourage wider involvement in decision making
- ensure all service providers promote an empowering culture within their services.



This document can be made available in other formats. For further information please telephone 01803 208370.



torbay housing partnership



People First

Housing and Home

A draft strategy for people aged 50+



Introduction

Torbay Council has recognised the importance of meeting the needs, demands and wishes of its increasingly elderly population.

This strategy document forms part of Torbay's over-arching Older People's Strategy; "People First" – a strategy to improve the quality of life of people aged over 50 living in the Bay.

Our Vision

"People in Torbay will live as independently as possible in their chosen home, with dignity and the support needed that prevents any unnecessary move to institutional care"

Achieving our six key objectives

1. Ensuring there is a range of quality, suitable housing to meet the needs of people in Torbay

Good quality housing is crucial for people to have the choice to continue living at home and to live healthy and active lives within their communities.

We plan to:

- work with the housing associations and other social landlords in Torbay to identify the suitability of their housing for older people
- develop a financial assistance policy, which will enable people on a low income, who live in unsuitable housing, to improve their home
- create minimum design standards for all new housing
- ensure that 5% of all new social rented housing is suitable for wheelchair users
- promote energy efficiency initiatives to reduce fuel poverty for people
- improve the close working links with Torbay Care Trust, to house disabled people suitably
- improve the prioritisation of the needs of people who need improvements or facilities funded by a Disability Facilities Grant.

2. Improve access to a choice of suitable housing and support to help people remain at home

To maintain their independence and quality of life older people need to have access to affordable, well-maintained and adaptable housing. They need to be able to use other services which may include, transport, shops, leisure and learning facilities as well as health and personal care in times of illness. They also need to feel safe and secure within their home and neighbourhood.

We plan to work with housing and support providers to:

- develop a single process for assessing people's support needs
- develop a network of support services delivered from sheltered housing schemes to the local community
- ensure all people, regardless of their tenure, have equal access to support services
- develop extra care housing
- work with Homefinder Torbay to ensure the allocation of housing for older people is aimed at people with the right level of need
- identify ways to increase the range and use of technology to help people continue to live in their homes.

3. Improve partnership working

Improving the access and range of services will only be effective if all agencies work together to make best use of their staff and other resources. By developing a partnership approach to service delivery, older people will benefit regardless of where they live.

We plan to:

- improve the effectiveness of Torbay's Housing Services' Older Person's Strategy Group to become the driving force to deliver the necessary changes to services
- bring together our service providers and other stakeholders to deliver the actions arising from the strategy
- map services provided across all agencies to ensure duplication is removed and that there is clarity around services that are provided
- ensure that all stakeholders are involved in the process for commissioning new services.

4. Meet individual needs

Some older people face additional obstacles with access to services because of sight, hearing and mobility problems. People from minority ethnic groups may also face language or cultural barriers and may perceive that information is not relevant to their needs. It is important that services reach the more vulnerable groups.

We plan to:

- produce a clearer picture of the needs of older people from minority communities living in Torbay
- ensure that all staff working in support services attend appropriate training for working with older people from Black and Minority Ethnic Groups and older lesbian, gay and transsexual people
- ensure all staff are fully trained in cultural and religious diversity
- ensure literature and publicity material about housing related support services promotes inclusion
- ensure that action is taken to increase staff diversity.



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