

TITLE OF REPORT: Review of the role of housing in improving health and wellbeing – progress update

REPORT OF: Director of Public Health

SUMMARY

Care, Health & Wellbeing Overview and Scrutiny Committee agreed that the focus of its review in 2016-17 was the role of housing in improving health and wellbeing.

The aim of the review was to recommend key housing actions that would have the greatest impact on improving health and wellbeing.

This report provides a summary update on progress against those recommendations to date. The Gateshead Housing Company has provided a more detailed update on their activities which is included in full in Appendix A.

Update April 2018

Recommendation 1: Review the actions set out in the Housing Intervention Work Plan, and, where appropriate, provide Public Health support to assist in maximising the benefits to health arising from delivering elements of the Plan. The evidence presented in the review identifies priority candidate elements with the greatest potential to improve health and wellbeing, further detailed below.

Update: Progress on delivery of the Housing Intervention Work Plan (HIWP) is being reviewed by DT&PP in consultation with CW&L, and Public Health contribution to this is in place.

The interventions contained within the HIWP are to be integrated within the Gateshead Housing Strategy 2018-2030, currently in draft stage.

Recommendation 2: Ensure that improving health and wellbeing is reflected in the production of local development plan documents ie. Making Spaces for Growing Places (MSGP).

Update: Consultation on the draft MSGP concluded at the end of August, Public Health was a consultee. The draft MSGP is programmed to be reported to Cabinet in October 2018.

Recommendation 3: Review how health and wellbeing is reflected in Council Letting Policies and TGHC support services (ie. health criteria, preventative interventions).

Update: A review of the Council's Strategic Tenancy Policy will be carried out as part of the of the Housing Strategy review (The Gateshead Housing Strategy 2018-2030, is currently in draft stage; due for completion in 2018), and existing Allocations and Letting Policies are under review, by the Council and The Gateshead Housing Company. The reviews will reflect the Council's agenda to make Gateshead a place where everyone thrives, as well as respond to Government policy and legislative changes, including the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017, and ongoing Welfare reform, including roll out of Universal Credit).

Recommendation 4: Assess the current range of Council private sector housing interventions to maximise their contribution to health and wellbeing (including energy efficiency programmes, private landlord accreditation, Selective Landlord Licensing, financial assistance programmes, falls prevention, Making Every Contact Count).

Update: This forms work streams of the Housing Intervention Work Plan (HIWP), and will be integrated within the Gateshead Housing Strategy 2018-2030, currently in draft stage. This work will also be influenced by the Council's agenda to make Gateshead a place where everyone thrives.

Recommendation 5: Undertake actions to ensure that the greatest proportion of Council housing is maintained to a standard that secures the health and wellbeing of residents within the context of changes to revenue and capital funding.

Update: Responsive Repairs Budgets have been protected during 17/18 following the decision to bring delivery of Repairs in-house from April 2017 - being delivered by TGHC/Construction.

The Level of Capital investment in Council owned stock has also been maintained to support continued investment in housing stock.

Key areas of investment include:

Maintaining Decency – Approx £11m of investment in elemental replacements, kitchens, bathrooms, heating systems, window replacement, etc.

Equality act, Fire Safety and Energy Efficiency works – Approx £13m of investment in these areas combined, notably during 2017/18 this has included the commencement of the HEIGHTs project focusing on energy infrastructure and fabric improvements to 7 tower blocks, improving thermal efficiency and delivering energy savings for residents.

Additional areas of investment include a programme of external wall insulation to non-traditional stock, electrical works and upgrades to warden call systems for vulnerable residents.

Housing Capital programme includes provision each year of £1.5m for Adaptations to provide aids and adaptations to enable residents to live independently. So far in

this financial year (Apr 2017 – Feb 2018) we have completed 315 major adaptations to council dwellings which include installation of equipment such as stairlifts, hoists, through floor lifts and stairlifts. Other home adaptations include level access showers, extensions to allow ground floor living and access ramps.

A further 203 adaptations to private dwellings carried out this year to date through the Disabled Facilities Grant facility.

Recommendation 6: Determine the circumstances where the Council seeks to ensure that high design and space standards are delivered, including accessibility.

Update: The Council remains committed through the Core Strategy & Urban Core Plan, and through the development of Council land, to secure good design within new housing developments.

The 2017/18 Strategic Housing Market Assessment (August 2017) has provided evidence relating to the need for higher space and accessibility standards within new housing development in Gateshead. This evidence is being used to inform the emerging, detailed MSGP local planning policies, however, it has already been established that the assessed need for accessible homes cannot be fully delivered through our planning policy requirements, due to viability constraints; alternative means of meeting this need will have to be considered. Supplementary research is being undertaken to provide additional evidence to support the proposal to require all new housing development to be compliant with the new Nationally Described Space Standards (NDSS).

The intention is that the draft MSGP will be reported to Cabinet in October.

Recommendation 7: Determine the need for, location of and processes to deliver adequate levels of supported, specialist, and older persons housing.

Update: A review of all specialist and supported accommodation needs is being lead by Care Wellbeing and Learning, in consultation with other Council Services including C&E, and TGHC. The review work is covering Young People; Vulnerable Adults; Learning Disabilities; Older People, and will lead to the commissioning of new models of support and supported accommodation.

The reviews will be informed by the findings of the Gateshead Homelessness and Multiple and Complex Needs Health Needs Assessment (HHNA), and will need to reflect the Council's Thrive agenda.

Recommendation

Overview and Scrutiny Committee is recommended to note and comment on the six monthly review update.

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Appendix A

Recommendation

Review how health and wellbeing is reflected in Council Letting Policies and The Gateshead Housing Company (TGHC) support services (ie. health criteria, preventative interventions).

Update

Home adaptations

The Gateshead Housing Company manages the provision of adaptations to council dwellings from a council budget, and also manages the provision of adaptations to private properties funded through the Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG).

An ageing population means that a greater number of people in Gateshead are likely to be living with long term conditions and becoming frail in the years ahead. This will increase demand on both health, housing and social care services.

It is difficult to predict future need as the health needs of vulnerable groups are often complex, requiring a coordinated and flexible response from services. However, a consideration of those with existing conditions can give an indication of those whose vulnerabilities may impact on their physical and mental wellbeing or frailty in the future. It is estimated that there are nearly 20,000 people with a mental health problem in Gateshead. Almost 10,000 have moderate physical disabilities and a further 3,000 have serious physical disabilities. Other significant conditions include hearing and visual impairment, learning disabilities and autism which affect a further 10,000 people.

The number of people contacting The Gateshead Housing Company for adaptations help or advice continues to rise. So far in this financial year (Apr 2017 – Feb 2018) we have completed 315 major adaptations to council dwellings which include installation of equipment such as stairlifts, hoists, through floor lifts and stairlifts. Other home adaptations include level access showers, extensions to allow ground floor living and access ramps.

We have carried out a further 203 adaptations to private dwellings through the Disabled Facilities Grant facility.

In the full year 2016/17 a total of 679 adaptations were carried out. 353 were funded from the council capital budget and 326 were funded from DFG.

The 353 council funded adaptations included:

- 158 level access showers
- 73 stairlifts
- 16 ceiling track hoists
- 39 access ramps

Other adaptations included over-bath showers, automatic WC's, through-floor lifts, door opening systems and kitchen adaptations. The 326 DFG adaptations included:

- 124 level access showers
- 86 stairlifts
- 9 ceiling track hoists
- 11 door opening systems
- 1 ground floor extension

Other adaptations include bathroom alterations, safe play areas, rise and fall baths and ground floor WC's

Medical priority for rehousing

The Gateshead Housing Company manages the housing register and the allocation of council dwellings.

The Health and Housing team assess requests for additional priority for medical issues, carry out home visits, and make appropriate awards.

The team includes an Occupational Therapist and an Occupational Therapist Assistant. Their role is to ensure that those with severe disabilities who need alternative housing are matched to appropriate properties that are either already adapted or that are adaptable.

In 2016/17 the team assessed 924 applications, resulting in the following awards:

- 6 x Critical
- 189 x Urgent
- 201 x Substantial

Of the remaining 513, 224 did not fit the criteria for an award and 304 had experienced a change of circumstances since making the application and it was no longer required. For example, some adaptations may have been provided or rehousing had already been secured.

292 households were rehoused who had been awarded additional priority on medical grounds. The awards are a reflection of the unsuitability of someone's present home in relation to their medical condition. The alternative to a priority award to help someone move is to adapt their home to make it more suitable for them. By moving people who are unsuitably housed, it saves the cost of potential adaptations. The 292 cases of rehousing gave an estimated saving on adaptations of £1,094,866 over the year.

Number rehoused using a medical priority (Critical, Urgent or Substantial):	292
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Number rehoused from Council properties:	180 (61.43%)
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Number rehoused from private* properties: *Housing Assocs, owner-occupiers & private landlords.	113 (38.57%)
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Estimated savings by using existing adaptations:	£1,094,866
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Intergenerational Get Together

The Older Persons Housing team are working in partnership with Gateshead Council to develop part intergenerational get-together sessions with local schools.

The programme initially involves 6 weekly session including arts and crafts, music and movement and story time.

The sessions aim to promote a greater understanding and respect between generations and contribute to a more cohesive community encouraging the use of local services such as the library for borrowing story books.

At McErlane square we have brought together 10 residents from and 16 children from St Alban's School and Nursery

The first session took place on Friday 26 January with a Gruffalo storytelling theme at St Alban's

School. For the second session, children from the nursery came to the sheltered scheme with their musical instruments for a music and movement session.

One of the sessions will discuss housing and pupils will have the opportunity to learn about the lives of residents living in sheltered accommodation.

After these sessions the group will continue to spend time together with activities such as gardening and a summer picnic.

We intend to develop links with a number of schools to deliver joint work around technology, arts and crafts, gardening and performing arts.

Care Navigators and social prescribing

Models of social prescribing can enable GPs to access community-based support for their patients, including access to advice on employment, housing and debt advice.

Since November 2017, TGHC have developed a partnership arrangement with three medical practices based within the East and West of the borough, to develop a referral process to support social prescribing within Gateshead.

The local housing teams have had an opportunity to meet with the dedicated care link workers based in their neighbourhood, to develop an understanding of each other's role.

A total of 14 referrals have been received and advice and support has provided on rehousing, repairs, home conditions, medical adaptations and financial support. This has included joint home visits where appropriate.

The care navigators have also been provided with details of the Moving Forward Customer Training programme, which individual clients may benefit from.

Customer Training

Through the company's Moving Forward training programme we provide a range of free short courses for customers to help them maintain a healthy and happy lifestyle. These courses are designed to focus on the physical, mental and financial health and wellbeing of our customers and include:

- Dementia Awareness
- Diabetes Awareness
- Mental Health Awareness
- Manage Your Stress
- Mindfulness
- Digital Training
- Gardening
- Understanding Universal Credit.

We understand that many of our customers are faced with numerous pressures in their lives so our courses aim to help support customers with issues they may be experiencing. For example, the increase in reports of people being diagnosed with Dementia, Diabetes and mental health illnesses, led to us delivering awareness raising sessions around these important health issues to help provide timely information and support to customers who may be affected directly or indirectly by these conditions.

Digital training has been rolled out across a number of our sheltered schemes to help older people learn valuable skills to access online services and reduce the risk of social isolation by learning how to keep in touch with friends and family. This training has also been tailored and delivered to people with learning disabilities, which has had a particular focus around online safety.

Our gardening courses aim to equip customers with basic skills to help maintain their gardens and learn how to grow some fruit and vegetables, promoting healthy living. It is also reported around how gardening can offer wider health benefits due to the exercise it provides and help with improved mental health, for example meeting new people.

Manage Your Stress and Mindfulness courses also help customers recognise triggers that may affect their stress levels and learn useful techniques to manage and cope with these.

Our new course, Understanding Universal Credit, has evolved from our How to Manage Your Money course as we are aware of the significant increase in UC claims in Gateshead. It aims to help those customers who need additional support around their UC claims and how it affects them, and will also include basic budgeting skills to help people organise their money and understand more about priority payments.

We will continue to monitor the training we provide to ensure it is up to date and relevant in

relation to the wider issues around health and wellbeing in Gateshead.

The TGHC Community Fund

Our Community Fund, through the Community Foundation, enables Gateshead based community groups to apply for cash and in-kind grants of up to £5,000. One of the criteria for applying is, 'improving health and wellbeing opportunities for young people and the elderly.'

Many local people have benefitted from this funding. Some examples of funding that has been awarded include the following groups:

Gateshead Older Peoples Assembly – Their 'Eating Well Project' helped to support the rising concern of malnutrition amongst older people by offering participatory sessions to members to learn how to eat healthily at low cost, maintain a healthy weight and how to recognise the signs of unhealthy weight loss.

Gateshead Clubhouse – secured funding to make improvements to their room and kitchen facilities and provision of Mindfulness courses. Gateshead Clubhouse is a mental health community hub run entirely by its members and this grant has enabled more people to use the centre, generating more revenue and longevity for the group. Provision of Mindfulness training has helped many members manage and improve their mental health and wellbeing.

Silverline Memories – is a local charity providing support to people who are living with Dementia. They were awarded a grant to help improve their community garden which is a safe place where members and their carers can go to enjoy the relaxation benefits of it or actively take part in some gardening. The main aim of the garden is to address issues of loneliness and isolation associated with later life and dementia.

Newcastle Eagles Basketball – since 2009 we have worked in partnership with Newcastle Eagles, who effectively deliver health related engagement activities in primary schools. The 'Hoops4Health' project is an initiative to help develop the health of young people and sees players going into schools and delivering workshops to the children in year 5 and 6.

Workshops cover the benefits of activity and fitness, healthy eating and drinking, not smoking and confidence building, recently replacing a bespoke stereotyping workshop for Gateshead. Each of these workshops link directly to the health and wellbeing of young people, aiming to

increase exercise, improve diet and increase self-confidence. The latter workshop is new this year and has been introduced to support recent NHS reports of increasing levels of depressive thoughts among young people.

Some children have signed up to regular coaching sessions as a result of these workshops. All children also receive a free pair of tickets to a home game, which provides the opportunity to access sport that they may not have otherwise been able to, encouraging greater potential for future participation and improved health of young people.

Breakfast Clubs – in partnership with Greggs Foundation, we support a number of breakfast clubs in primary schools that are in some of the most deprived areas in Gateshead.

Providing breakfast clubs ensures young children receive a breakfast before school, where in many cases the alternative being they wouldn't have been fed anything. Feedback from teachers highlights the impact the clubs have had on the young people, some of which is shown below:

- *“Has had a major contribution to improved attendance, especially those regularly late”*
- *“Since attending breakfast club, staff have noticed a significant increase in children’s concentration and attention in class”*
- *“Has introduced better contact and relationships with parents because of the early drop off at breakfast club”.*

Initially the clubs are supported for a period of two years, when we will then review their progress and aim to provide further support where possible.

Rent and Income Advice and Support Services

Tenants who are experiencing difficulties may approach the TGHC Advice and Support team directly or they may be referred into the team by another service. Often a tenant may initially present as having 1 or 2 issues that they require support with, but in a large number of cases, it becomes apparent that the level of support required are well in excess of what was originally identified.

At present a majority of the referrals to the TGHC Advice and Support team are for assistance

with short term crisis issues. This can include:

- Assistance to make claims for the correct benefits
- Navigate the benefits system with an ongoing claim (e.g. Universal Credit claims at present)
- Help with delays to benefit payments
- Appealing sanctions
- Food parcels
- Fuel poverty

Once an Advice and Support Officer begins working with a tenant, further issues may then be identified; these issues can have a longer term detrimental impact on a tenant's health and wellbeing and we work with these tenants providing extra support that is focused on improving their health, wellbeing and ability to manage their own affairs.

These can be issues such as:

- Substance misuse
- Mental health issues (poor mental health or recognised conditions)
- Social isolation
- Serious multiple debt issues
- Family crisis's
- Numerous vulnerabilities

With tenants requiring higher levels of support, we make go much further than just dealing with the presented issue; we make sure we stay in touch, carrying out regular keeping in touch phone calls to ensure the tenant is managing to deal with their day to day issues.

TGHC investment work

Within the 2016-17 Capital budget TGHC completed 174 boiler replacements, this was a scheme to replace solid fuel appliances, gas back boilers and aged inefficient boilers. The boilers that were fitted were Vaillant eco TECpro28 and Greenstar 30i Erp boilers. Both of these boiler types are A rated with the added bonus of being highly efficient and economical to run with up to 89.3% efficiency, this will not only be cheaper to run for the customer but giving reliable instant heating /hot water .Efficient heating and hot water systems have shown to help in

the health & wellbeing of the customers, for example:

- People being less sick; so more time at work no loss in income
- Reduce cold related illness which can help effect cardiovascular and respiratory ailments
- Reduction of damp within the properties
- Helps in mobility; potential to improve independent living
- It can also improve mental status and create a positive environment for the customer
- Financial gains to the customer due to lower running costs.

Housing support Services

The Housing Services teamwork in partnership with NTW to provide housing support and advice to people experiencing mental ill health and well-being concerns.

We are developing our work on hospital discharge to play an important role to play in support customer's health and wellbeing and offer a valuable solution in both discharges from hospitals and the prevention of new admissions. We have established one point of contact with hospital wards to refer customers through, whether it is mental health reasons or physical health reasons they are unable to return home.

We are working with public health to monitor the access to and uptake of stop smoking services by homeless people. This monitoring will be built into the new homeless database being developed. If a customer advises that they are a smoker they will be offered very brief intervention advice on smoking.

We currently monitor and measure outcomes including health and wellbeing within the support plan used by support services – this includes support in relation to registering and attending GP appointments.

Front line housing support teams are currently undergoing PIE training and we are extending our involvement in the Making Every Contact Count training run via public health.

Older Persons Health and Wellbeing

Boccia Indoor Bowls

Boccia is an indoor sport with similar traits to French Bowls. In September 2015 The Older Persons Team began working with Gateshead Council's Get Active Team to find a replacement for the Rookie Golf program which was proving too costly to run. Get Active offered a number of free sports programs to engage people of all ages and abilities, including people with limited mobility and those who do not typically take part in physical activities.

An introductory Boccia Cup tournament was held in October 2015 at Gateshead Leisure Centre to celebrate International Older Persons Day. The event saw over 60 tenants from Sheltered Schemes across Gateshead form teams to compete for the cup. The tournament was extremely popular and led to the formation of a Boccia League.

Teams now compete against one another on a weekly basis during home and away league fixtures. Customers have thoroughly enjoyed playing the game but also relish the interaction with other schemes. This has led to a number of new friendships and the organisation of other joint events between neighbouring schemes.

As well as being lots of fun, the indoor bowls game has health benefits, as sessions get older people more mobile, improving their balance and reducing the risk of slips, trips and falls. Training has been given to a number of Sheltered Scheme Officers who can now facilitate games. The Older Persons Team's Tenant Led Budget was also used to purchase Boccia equipment so that teams can now practice regularly ahead of league fixtures.

Since the initial tournament in 2015, the cup competition has gone from strength to strength with the event growing in size every year. In 2016 The Mayor of Gateshead, Councillor Allison Ilderton-Thompson presented winners Mosspool with the cup and in 2017, staff from the Older Person's Housing Team refereed the all of the matches since the Council's Get Active team was scaled back and rebranded as Go Gateshead.

Work is currently ongoing to involve AgeUK with the Boccia league. These links were made after Tom Brewer from AgeUK was invited to present the 2017 Boccia Cup to this year's winners East and South Lea. AgeUK are keen to support teams to enter the league from the care homes that they are currently involved with. This relationship could also lead to AgeUK helping to provide transport via one of their mini-buses for Boccia Teams when they have a long distance to travel for away fixtures.

HenPower

The HenPower project, run by North East charity Equal Arts sees older people keeping hens to

reduce depression, loneliness and improve well-being. Set up at Wood Green Sheltered Scheme in 2013, the project has attracted press and television coverage from all round the world. Film crews from Germany to South Korea have visited the scheme to speak to the residents about the difference keeping chickens has made to their lives and that of the community in Bill Quay.

The 'Hensioners' most recent television appearance on Good Morning Britain turned into an internet sensation after television host Kate Garaway was struggled to hold a live chicken on air. In October they had attended the prestigious TSB Pride of Britain awards in London after being nominated for the award. This followed their award for being voted winners of The Pride of the Northeast in May 2017.

Awards and television appearances are now commonplace for the 'Hensioners' but they also revel in attending schools, events and roadshows to show people about the benefits of the project. They have inspired other Sheltered Schemes and Care Homes to start their own projects and will often get involved with providing advice and assistance for new start-ups.