

Building For The Future - Residential Services for Older People in Gwynedd



“Making it easier for older people to live
full and independent lives”

Newsletter 2
September 2007

Welcome to the second edition of Gwynedd Council's Newsletter which discusses plans for developing suitable residential services for older people in Gwynedd.

Here is the latest news about our work with our local partners since publication of the first edition in March, 2007. During the last few months, a lot of work has been going on to move the Plan forward in the four areas: Bala, Bangor, Ffestiniog and Porthmadog.

Planning to respond to the Need

One of the project's main outputs to date is an assessment of older people's health, social care and housing needs in the four areas. It is thought that this is the first time an assessment of its kind has been undertaken at a local level. Services from Gwynedd Council, the National Public Health Service, Gwynedd Local Health Board, North West and North East Wales NHS Trusts, General Practitioners, Housing Associations, the voluntary and private sectors all took part. A copy of the Assessment is available on the Council's website or by contacting the Project Manager.

Main messages arising from the Needs Assessment

- It is likely that the population over 75 years old will grow significantly within Gwynedd during the next 20 years. The proportion of older people will grow by 18% during this period.
- There will be an increase in the number of disabled people – an increase of almost 70% is expected between 2002 and 2031
- The number of dementia sufferers is increasing. A recent report by King's College suggests that the general number of dementia sufferers in Gwynedd is 1,862. The expectation

is that there will be an increase of 38% over the next 15 years, leading to the need for future dementia care within the county to be considered.

- There is a demand for the provision of Extra Care Housing in the four areas as part of a range of residential care choices for older people.
- Older people expect, and want, to be able to stay in their own homes, as long and as independently as possible.
- A high proportion of older people suffer from fuel poverty.
- The incentive to move from home reflects the wider research completed by the University of Wales Bangor. The reasons given by respondents of the HAPPI project can be grouped under the headings of serious disability, moderate disability, specific health problems and illness leading to dependency, loss of self-control or mobility. The other reasons include inability to continue undertaking tasks in the home, gardening, having to give up driving, crime or fear of crime and homes in need of adaptation.
- The aspirations of older people are changing. The Assessment shows that they wish to have accommodation with more space, especially so that visitors or family can stay over night, larger kitchens, a choice of tenancy and a location within a familiar local community, a high level of privacy in their personal lives, use of amenities to follow their educational, cultural and fitness interests, health care facilities and the opportunity to take part in the design and development of services that affect their lives.

Information sheet

As Extra Care Housing is a new development in Gwynedd, a new information sheet – What is Extra Care Housing? – has been prepared. It has been approved by a reading panel established under the banner of the Older People Partnership. A copy can be downloaded from Gwynedd Council's website www.gwynedd.gov.uk/buildingforthefuture or, if you would like a hard copy, please contact the Project Manager.

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Responding to the Need

Through an analysis of the Needs Assessment and discussions with specialists and local people, the following conclusions were reached regarding the residential service that will be needed.

Bala	30 Extra Care Housing Units including intermediate and respite care units, and day care;
Bangor	20 residential care beds for people with dementia, day care and the development of 40 Extra Care Housing Units;
Ffestiniog	40 Extra Care Housing Units including intermediate care units, nursing beds and palliative care;
Porthmadog	40 Extra Care Housing Units including intermediate care units, respite care and Extra Care Housing Units for people with dementia.

There will be further work over the coming months to look at the kind of workforce and residential and nursing provision that will be needed, together with the costs, to ensure that the planned provision of service is viable.

Engagement

Four Area Forums [one for each area] have been established, to discuss the Needs Assessment and to contribute to the task of identifying local residential service development needs.

The Area Forums have met twice by now and a programme of further meetings has been arranged. The Forums are regarded as a local voice and an important link with the local community. For details of members of your local Forum, contact the Project Manager (details at the end of this Newsletter).

The Forums decided to extend an open invitation to local organisations and agencies to meetings during January 2008 in order to share information and ideas about how best to develop the residential and support services in the four areas. Arrangements will be publicised locally in various ways.

There will be further opportunities for older people and their carers to engage in, and contribute to, the developments during the coming months and we would welcome opinions about the residential provision as it develops.

www.gwynedd.gov.uk/buildingforthefuture

Identifying sites

A study to identify suitable land for developing Extra Care Housing in the four areas has been undertaken. In August, applications for outline planning consents were presented to Gwynedd Council and the Snowdonia National Park.

Working in partnership

In July, Gwynedd Council's Board agreed that the developments should move forward in partnership with Undod, a consortium of housing associations which includes (amongst others) representation from Cymdeithas Tai Eryri, Cymdeithas Tai Clwyd and the North Wales Housing Association.

The next steps

The next key step is to apply to the Welsh Assembly Government by the end of October for capital funding to build Extra Care Housing.

Further work will go ahead on workforce matters and the services to be developed in the four areas.

Statement by Gwynedd Council's Senior Portfolio Leader for Care, who has responsibility for realisation of the project

Councillor John Wyn Williams said "There has been significant progress with the work programme for developing a choice of residential services. I will ensure that this momentum continues to move the developments forward."

The project's progress will be reported in the next edition of the Newsletter, in January 2008.

Further information

If you have any queries or require further information, please contact:

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This Newsletter is available in alternative formats. Please contact the Project Manager.