

Carers and Housing: Addressing their needs



The Princess Royal Trust
for Carers



Briefing paper prepared by Peter Fletcher Associates Ltd. (PFA)
for The Princess Royal Trust for Carers

*“I am delighted that housing is recognised
as absolutely critical to the wellbeing of
carers as well as those they support.”*

Dr Philippa Russell CBE

Chair of the Standing Commission on Carers

Key findings

- Suitable and affordable housing, and related services, are critical to the wellbeing of carers and of their families.
- Carers do not always know where to go for help on housing issues.
- Although progress is being made to recognise and address the housing issues of carers in their own right, more needs to be done.

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INTRODUCTION

It is now widely recognised that housing can be a major issue for people who need to access health and social care services. The importance of suitable housing for the UK's six million carers, however, is less well understood.

A carer is someone of any age who provides unpaid support to family or friends who could not manage without this help. This could be caring for a relative, partner or friend who is ill, frail, disabled or has mental health or substance misuse problems. The term carer should not be confused with a care worker, or care assistant, who receives payment for looking after someone.

Carers are the largest source of care and support in each area of the UK. It is in everyone's interest that they are supported. In order to care safely and in good health, carers need information, support, respect and recognition from the professionals with whom they are in contact. Improved support for the person being cared for can make the carer's role more manageable.

The Princess Royal Trust for Carers, with support from the Department of Health Housing Learning and Improvement Network (LIN), has commissioned Peter Fletcher Associates Ltd. (PFA) to investigate:

- whether carers themselves see housing as a key issue.
- the housing issues with which carers identify themselves.
- what is happening to address those issues.
- the development issues to be tackled so as to ensure that the housing needs of carers are addressed more fully in the future.

Carers and Housing: Addressing their needs was a limited piece of fact finding work, structured around identifying the housing issues affecting carers and suggesting actions in response to these issues. Resources were not available for a large scale survey and the issues facing young carers are not specifically addressed.

Key facts about carers

- One in ten people in the UK is a carer.
- Around two million people move in and out of caring every year.
- There are 175,000 young carers in the UK.
- One million carers have given up work to care.
- There are 1.25 million carers caring for over 50 hours a week. This is a full-time workforce greater than that of the National Health Service.



HOUSING ISSUES FACING CARERS AND CURRENT SOLUTIONS

1. Where to go for help

Suitable and accessible information and housing advice is a critical starting point in addressing the housing issues faced by carers.

Issues

At the present time, only limited information is available to help both carers and professionals understand the housing issues that impact on carers' lives and how these impacts can be addressed. Carers' organisations recognise that a gap in knowledge and support exists in this area. Some housing-based advice organisations focus on providing information for carers, but it is not clear whether these are well known and accessed by carers.

Actions

A range of organisations provide information and advice to carers on housing issues, including organisations specialising in advice on housing services and options, and organisations aimed specifically at providing advice and support to carers.

- Advice services for carers.
- Specialist housing advice services for older people and their carers, and for people with learning disabilities and their carers.

Useful centres of advice and information are noted throughout this document and on page 17.



2. Housing lettings policies involving carers

Historically, there has been considerable variation in how far local authority and housing association letting policies address the needs of carers.

Issues

Families wanting to take on a caring role are not prioritised for housing

A person may want to care for a family member, but is unable to do so due to living in separate housing. That person may not, however, be given priority on waiting lists, resulting in care at home being made, potentially, impossible.

Separate bedroom for carer

Carers are not always recognised as needing a separate bedroom when, for example, their spouse has continence or sleeping issues.

Living in a location and environment appropriate to individual needs

Sometimes, an individual's condition means that they need to live in a specific environment. A person with autism, for example, may need a quiet location for their condition to be manageable.

Standards and overcrowding

Space needed by families with caring roles needs to be recognised in terms of housing standards and overcrowding. See Appendix 1 for information about the current standard for statutory overcrowding and about the crowding and space hazard rating system.

Actions

A growing number of local authorities and housing associations are now taking carers' needs into account in housing lettings policies by:

- implementing allocations policies allowing an extra bedroom to be made available for a family or live-in carer.
- accepting referrals from adult or children's services when housing circumstances may be unsatisfactory, due to behavioural problems, arguments causing family instability, the inability of carers to manage, or the need to move to independent housing before the carer(s) become(s) too old. Eligible applicants will also be considered for the housing or transfer register.
- recognising that, in relation to overcrowding, some families may need an extra room for a family member for medical reasons.



3. Inheritance issues for carers living in rented property

Issues

Inheritance rights if carer has not been made joint tenant

The same tenancy can be inherited only once, presenting a problem for people caring for elderly parents if joint tenancy has not been agreed before the death of the parents. See John's story.

John's story

John has lived with his parents his whole life and has cared for them both over the last 10 years. The tenancy agreement for their home was in his father's name and his mother succeeded to the tenancy when his father died. As John's mother became increasingly frail, he cared for her also. When she died, however, John could not succeed to the tenancy because this can occur once only, and he had not been made a joint tenant earlier. Not only has he coped with his bereavement, John must also now face the prospect of losing his childhood home.

Carer under-occupying a property on relative's death

Carers can sometimes succeed to a tenancy only to find that the local authority deems the property too large for their needs and thus they are under-occupying the property. See Moira's story.

Moira's story

Moira cared for her parents and has the right to inherit the tenancy of their two bedroomed property. Both of her parents have now died, but the local authority will not allow Moira to stay in the home which they say is too large for her needs, even though it is her home and she has been caring for both her parents and, she argues, has saved the state significant sums.



4. Staying put: equipment, adaptations, repairs and improvements

Carers' groups and organisations sent a range of feedback regarding equipment, repairs, and adaptations, all of which can be vital to enabling a carer and their family to remain living together at home.

Issues

Finding out about what equipment one needs

According to carers, making sense of equipment requirements to support a disabled family member can be very hard. It is easy to purchase incorrect equipment and waste money.

Getting small repairs done

Some carers and their families find it hard to carry out small repairs, and, particularly for older carers, this can trigger not being able to carry on caring in the family home

Complexity, length of time to get adaptations done and paying for adaptations

Carers state that acquiring information about home adaptations and the process of application can be complicated and difficult to navigate. In addition, timescales can be so long that clients and their carers end up having to move to more accessible accommodation rather than being able to stay put. Paying for adaptations, through Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs) for example, can also be complicated.

Adaptations for people who do not have physical disabilities

Inconsistency exists regarding the provision of adaptations by local authorities for people who do not have physical disabilities, including people with learning disabilities, autism or mental health problems. Adaptation may be required for the safety of the individual, the carers or the rest of the family. Clarification is required on what is or is not covered for Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs) and the role of councils.

Funding adaptations for owner occupiers

It is not always possible for families in owner occupied property to finance their assessed contribution to the costs of adaptations, leaving them with no alternative other than to stay put in unsatisfactory accommodation. See David and Jane's story.



David and Jane's story

David and Jane own their small house. They have two children, the oldest of whom has a rare degenerative condition. She is now 18, heavy, difficult to move, has poorly controlled epilepsy and needs help with all personal care. Jane can no longer carry her up the staircase to the bathroom and bedroom on the first floor, and so she sleeps in the one 'through room' living area of the house. There is no downstairs toilet and no washing facilities, apart from the kitchen sink. The daughter is obliged to use a commode in the living area which is used by all the family members. The family wants to build another room, including a shower room, on the ground floor, but Jane has had to give up work because of her caring role and the family cannot afford to move or to extend the mortgage to bridge the gap between the Disabled Facilities Grants on offer and the real costs of the building work.

It is likely that David's and Jane's daughter will go into residential care if no solution is found. The family as a whole feels disadvantaged by being a home owner and, as such, by not being seen as priorities for assistance with housing. Jane cannot return to work. It has proved impossible to locate suitable home care since care staff cannot take their daughter upstairs and they will not use the equipment downstairs, because it does not comply with their health and safety requirements.

Actions

Equipment

Information about equipment is available locally through the local Disabled Living Centre or the adult social services, health integrated equipment services and occupational therapy services. Help is available on a national level from organisations such as the Disabled Living Foundation.

Handyperson services

Handyperson services play an important role for carers who are looking after an older person in the family home. Services are widespread although not yet in all local authority areas. National government has, however, recognised their role and the considerable support they give and has allocated £33 million to fund handyperson services in every 'top tier' (unitary or county) local authority in England in 2009-10 and 2010-11.

Timescales for completing adaptations

Government guidance on adaptations suggests that the longest wait for adaptations from first referral to completion to the satisfaction of all parties, should be 83 days for high priority adaptations, 151 days for medium priority and 259 days for low priority. These targets are not always met however and approaches to reduce waiting times could benefit carers as well as other groups.



Funding adaptations

Property adaptations can be funded through a variety of ways. Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs) are perhaps the most frequently used. Owners can self-fund adaptations and a number of non profit organisations, such as the Houseproud Scheme, exist to provide loans.

Government should consider changing the rules around personal budget approaches to ensure that resources, that would otherwise have been spent on expensive residential care placement, can be used to adapt a house for cheaper and more desirable home-based caring where that is the family's choice.

Help with completing repairs and adaptations

Home Improvement Agencies (HIAs) are now available in most areas of England and have an important role in providing advice and support on adaptations and in helping carers arrange repairs or adaptations themselves. Foundations, the national body for HIAs, can provide details of HIAs around the country.

Care and Repair England, a national housing charity for older and disabled people and their carers, has produced, in consultation with the Elders Council in Newcastle, *In Good Repair*, a guide on organising home repairs and adaptations in the home.

David and Carol's story

David and Carol own a small house in London which they could only afford thanks to two wages. Carol continued to work when they had their first child, but their second child, Luke, was born with severe cerebral palsy and Carol found it was impractical to continue. David's income is good enough for them to be able to retain the house, but there is little spare money at the end of the month. The family managed until Luke was four, but as he is growing and getting heavier it is becoming more and more difficult. The visiting occupational therapist suggested major adaptations. David and Carol were assessed to pay towards the cost and couldn't afford it. They could also not afford to look into buying another, more suitable, house.

David and Carol feel trapped in their own home. Carol is beginning to have back pain through lifting Luke. The occupational therapist has tried to find suitable aids, but the house and the bathroom are too small for a complete solution to be found without major structural change.

Carol has asked for respite care to give her a rest from the strain of caring for Luke and so she and David can spend some time with their daughter. When the care agency visits they say they cannot ask staff to care for Luke in the home as it is as this would be unsafe for their staff.



5. Housing support and technology to help carers and families stay in the home

Issues

The need for housing support

Some carers and their families end up having to move home when, with the right sort of help and support, they might have been able to stay put.

Community alarm and telecare services

There is a lack of knowledge about other forms of support provided via community alarm and telecare services.

Actions

Housing support services

Local housing support services are available to carers, and provided by local authorities, housing associations or other housing support providers and funded through Supporting People Funding which is now being subsumed into Area Based Grants. The aim is to ensure that someone can stay living in their home. The types of services offered cover:

- general support, such as paying bills, healthy living, looking after clients' homes and developing their skills.
- specific assistance, such as helping clients deal with their mail, helping with house repairs and improvements, accessing other services.
- advice in dealing with benefits, housing security, health and safety, and how to change living accommodation.
- general counselling and assistance in maintaining contact with friends and family, and listening to clients and helping them to have the lives they want.

Housing-related support services are being developed to help carers and their families. Good practice examples can be seen throughout this briefing.

Good practice example 1

Carers Support North Wiltshire (CSNW), network member of The Princess Royal Trust for Carers, worked with Westlea Housing Association (WHA) to cross-reference the two organisations' databases. They found that over 45 per cent of carers on the CSNW database lived in a WHA property and, of those, over 40 per cent were parent carers. As a result, WHA has provided £16,500 per year for three years to develop a volunteer co-ordinator/activities worker to help sustain tenancies and support carers.

Community alarm and telecare services

Community alarm services provide a contact in times of emergency. Telecare, or assistive technology, covers a range of equipment and services to support an individual's safety and independence in the home. Such services can relieve stress for carers and help them to live a 'normal' life, as well as enabling the person they care for to live more independently. Telecare equipment can sense risks such as smoke, floods and gas, can give a reminder about taking medication, and even call for help if someone falls or wanders. Community alarm and telecare can be provided via the local authority as part of an assessment of need. Individuals and their carers can also buy community alarm and telecare packages.



6. Options for moving home

Carers have not always been aware of the options available should they want to move home with their family or should the person being cared for want to live separately from the family home.

Issues

Availability of adapted housing to which families can move

Although local authority activities are covered by the Disability Discrimination Acts 1995 and 2005 (with special reference to the Public Sector Disability Equality Duty), few local authorities have reliable data or maintained a housing register on the location of accessible housing.

People wanting to move from the family home

Some young disabled adults live at home in accommodation that may not be suitable, when actually they would prefer to live independently in their own adapted accommodation. Their options for suitable accommodation, however, can be very limited and in many cases, the inability of the person needing care to move causes problems for parents or other family carers. The situation can be particularly difficult where a person wants to move to a different local authority area. See Robert's story. In addition, given the pressures of their caring role, carers can need a considerable amount of support to be able to make a housing move.

Robert's story

Robert has cerebral palsy and needs high levels of support. He wants to move from his family home in an inner London borough, which is a largely inaccessible terraced three storey house, and where he has high dependency on his parents, to a home of his own in the shire county where he went to university and has a friendship base. Housing is far cheaper to buy, rent and adapt in his preferred area. This would also relieve his ageing parents from heavy caring responsibilities. However, he cannot get agreement to make the move. His family home in an inner London borough is unsuitable and he requires much personal lifting but there is no transferable package of care.

Housing choices for people who wish to continue to be able to remain living with, or be supported by their carer

Housing is a major cause of concern for carers who want to carry on caring but who may no longer be able to do so in the family home. This can affect older parent carers with an adult child, or partner carers who require a level of care which is often provided in a care home. There is also concern at families being separated.



Actions

Information and registers of accessible housing

A number of areas now have disabled housing registers and there are also independent accessible property registers that publicise accessible housing across different tenures, for example the Accessible Property Register which was set up in 2003 by wheelchair users. More information at <http://accessible-property.org.uk>

Personalisation and moving options

The personalisation of care, and particularly the introduction of personal budgets, is giving more choice and control to people with care or support needs and their carers. The Social Care Institute for Excellence (SCIE) recognises this in its briefing on the impact of personalisation for housing providers found at www.scie.org.uk/publications/ataglance/ataglance08.asp

The potential of Private Sector Leasing Schemes

Private Sector Leasing Schemes (PSLS) may also be helpful to increase choice for families with carers who want to move and for people who receive care and who want to leave the family home. PSLS are a way for councils and housing associations to increase their pool of housing stock by taking on private rental properties.

Inter-authority transfers

Some local authorities are very clear about tenants wishing to transfer to more suitable accommodation in their Housing Allocations Policy, but what happens with inter-authority transfers is much less clear. The rules surrounding transfers to another local authority for people who are not yet tenants in their own right often include a residency requirement (the ordinary residence rule) before people can go on the housing list.

Government-funded HOMES (Housing Mobility and Exchange Services) offer Homeswap, a self-help service designed to assist tenants find other suitable tenants to swap homes with. Further information can be found at <http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/HomeAndCommunity/SocialHousingAndCareHomes/MovingHome/index.htm>

Housing support to enable families and their carers move home

There are now examples of housing support services helping families and their carers, as shown in the example below.

Good practice example 2

MOVING ON in Dorset and adjacent areas is part of the charity Help and Care and helps carers make the initial decision about moving (via a support worker). They can help arrange adaptations if the carer decides to remain in his or her home, or can also market and sell a property and act as an expert 'moving planner'. The moving planner can help with a range of different tasks, from changing utility bills to house clearance and the actual move. They can also accompany visits to potential properties. The initial consultations are free, but the moving planner is charged for and the fee reinvested in the charity. This scheme is particularly attractive to the many carers who are self-funders, but who are fearful about managing a necessary move on their own. To find out more, go to www.helpandcare.org.uk/movingon



New housing options allowing carers to continue living with or supporting the person they care for

There is a growing number of specialist housing schemes to help carers carry on living with or supporting the people they care for. These include extra care housing for older people. Two examples are provided below, one in relation to older people, and one for learning disability.

Good practice example 3

Stanton Lodge in Swindon, Wiltshire is a development of 14 apartments run by Methodist Homes for couples where one of the couple has dementia. The development is on the same site as a purpose built, 60-room dementia and nursing care home. Both buildings are colour-coded to help people find their way around and are built within secure landscaped gardens designed with people with dementia in mind.

Tenure is leasehold or shared ownership priced at 75% or 50% of the value of the property plus a monthly rent on the outstanding amount of the capital payment. Services include a wellbeing package, including 24-hour staffing support on site, an activities and events programme and respite care of up to 10 days per year tailored to suit individual needs. Cleaning, washing, shopping care, meals and support services can be purchased on demand.

The Department of Health funded a capital programme of 10 specialist housing schemes for people with a learning disability, mostly targeted at people living with older carers. The schemes cater for a wide range of needs and are diverse, but have some common characteristics, including being based on self-contained accommodation and installing assistive technology as part of a modern support plan. An example involving one of the schemes which has enabled people to move out of the family home, with the active involvement of family carers, is provided below.

An evaluation report of the whole programme *A Measure of Success* was published in January 2008 and can be accessed via <http://www.dhcarenetworks.org.uk/IndependentLivingChoices/Housing/Topics/browse/LearningDisabilities/?parent=992&child=2495>



Good practice example 4

This is a pilot 'private sector leasing scheme' across Norfolk for 15 people, offering a 'lease premium' to private sector landlords to enable them to adapt and improve their properties. Portable assistive technology is provided and each person gets six hours of basic support per week, funded by Supporting People, with additional care packages provided by Adult Social Care Services. Some people use Direct Payments and employ their own staff.

The model of leasing properties from private sector landlords has been used for homeless families, but is not widely used for people with learning disabilities. Saffron Housing Association leases properties for five years from the landlords, then manages and maintains the properties, acting as landlord, and at the end of five years hands the properties back to the landlord in their original condition. Feedback from family carers of people moving in to these properties has been positive.

A detailed case study, *Private sector Leasing Scheme for People with Learning Difficulties in Norfolk*, is available at www.dhcarenetworks.org.uk/_library/Resources/Housing/Practice_examples/Housing_LIN_case_studies/Case_study_33.pdf

7. Funding and affordability

A number of issues have been raised in relation to funding and affordability of housing options for carers.

Issues

Impact for the carer if a person moves into a care home

When a person goes into a care home, the local authority can, in some circumstances, request that the person's home be sold to pay for the required care. If the person being cared for refuses to sell the property, the case can be taken through the courts and the local authority can place a legal charge on the property. Carers can, therefore, be left homeless if they are not:

- a husband, wife, civil partner or other partner and, in some cases, a former partner.
- a relative aged 60 or over.
- a relative under 60 who is 'incapacitated', for example, someone who is receiving a sickness or disability benefit.
- a child or step-child under 16 and supported by the resident.

Impact of assets on ability to change tenure from owning to social renting

Some housing associations appear to have policies which overlook individuals and their carers wanting to change tenure from owning to renting in order to move into more appropriate housing. If someone has property assets of more than a certain value, they may not be seen as a priority despite their sometimes urgent need for re-housing.



Paying housing benefit on two properties to enable adaptations work to be undertaken

If someone needs to move from an inappropriate property and is offered a new property that needs adapting, which may take several months, the tenant, who may be an individual or their carer, is still responsible for the rent on both. Housing benefit can be paid on two properties for a short time, but provision of adaptations can take much longer. People can either get into serious debt or end up staying in unsuitable housing due to an inability to pay the rent on a property whilst it is adapted.

Actions

Impact on the carer if their relative moves into a care home

For some people, the value of their home can take them over the capital limits and result in them having to pay care home fees, with the home being sold to pay these fees, unless the remaining resident falls into one of the categories outlined in Issues under 7. Funding and affordability. The council may, however, choose to ignore the value of the house if someone who doesn't fit into the above categories lives there. Some local authorities will allow the carer to continue living in the home during the life of the person who has moved into the care home.

Using housing benefit to pay mortgage interest

Housing benefit can be used to provide more suitable accommodation for an individual and to secure their future and relieve pressure on parents as carers in the long-term. It should be noted, however, that the use of housing benefit to pay a mortgage is a complex area and may not be available to everyone who is in receipt of housing benefit. There may be other benefits that can help in this area and advice should be sought from the Benefits Agency. Greater clarity is needed in this area for carers.

Impact of assets on ability to change tenure from owning

A growing number of social landlords are becoming more flexible about how they treat the property assets of older homeowners who wish to change tenure to renting. The question of assets also raises the issue of different forms of home purchase as a means of getting the right accommodation and broadening housing choice. Shared ownership may be an option for individuals or families who cannot afford to purchase outright a more accessible dwelling for the family carer and the person being cared for.

To find out more, go to www.direct.gov.uk/en/HomeAndCommunity/BuyingAndSellingYourHome/HomeBuyingSchemes/index.htm



FUTURE POLICY AND PRACTICE ISSUES

Progress is beginning to be made in building the housing needs of carers, in their own right, into housing policy and practice. However, the feedback received for this briefing raised a number of suggested areas for future work:

- Raising housing as an issue for carers higher up the policy agenda.
- Better information on housing for carers as part of a Carers Assessment.
- Clarity on the 'ordinary residence rule' when carers, or the person they care for, wish to move to a different area.
- Addressing inheritance rights for carers in rented housing who wish to remain in the family home.
- Lettings policies to take account of the needs of carers more consistently.
- More consistency around the treatment of property assets for families and carers who wish to move from owning to renting to secure suitable housing.
- More consistency in the assessment and provision of adaptations to support families with caring roles.
- More consistent provision of disabled housing registers across all local authorities.
- Addressing housing benefit issues that impact on carers and housing.
- Equipping housing staff on issues that impact on the housing circumstances of carers such as those raised in this report.



NATIONAL SOURCES OF HOUSING INFORMATION AND ADVICE FOR CARERS

Advice lines for carers that include housing

Carers Direct

NHS-provided telephone helpline, opened in April 2009 as part of the implementation plan for the National Carers' Strategy. The Helpline includes information on household finance, breaks, and technology for carers.

Freephone: 0808 802 0202

Email: CarersDirect@nhschoices.nhs.uk

Web: www.nhs.uk/carersdirect

Carers UK

Website and CarersLine provides confidential advice and information on carer's rights, including housing, as well as:

- benefits and tax credits.
- carers' employment rights.
- carers' assessments.
- the services available for carers and how to challenge decisions and complain effectively.

Freephone: 0808 808 7777

Web: www.carersuk.org

The Princess Royal Trust for Carers

Largest provider of comprehensive carers' support services in the UK. In addition to the independently managed Carers' Centres, young carer services and interactive websites, The Trust provides information and advice services for carers.

Tel: 0844 800 4361

Email: help@carers.org

Web: www.carers.org

Crossroads Care

Respite schemes across England provide practical support to carers where and when it is most needed, usually in the home. A trained carer support worker takes over from the carer to give them 'time to be themselves'. Many local Crossroads Care schemes provide additional services including young carers' projects, holiday play schemes for disabled children, and care for people who are terminally ill.

Tel: 0845 450 0350

Web: www.crossroads.org.uk



Specialist housing advice services for specific groups

Action for Blind People

Dedicated housing advice service for blind people who are carers or who are being cared for. This covers staying in the existing home and moving house.

Freephone: 0800 915 4666, Monday - Friday, 9am - 5pm

Web: www.actionforblindpeople.org.uk

Alzheimer's Society

Helpline for people affected by dementia, and factsheet on carers and housing that gives advice on adaptations, grants and funding.

Tel: 0845 300 0336

Web: www.alzheimers.org.uk

Contact a Family

UK-wide charity providing advice, information and support to the parents of all disabled children. Housing is one of the main areas where inquiries are received.

Freephone: 0808 808 3555

Text: 0808 808 3556

Email: helpline@cafamily.org.uk

FirstStop Advice

An independent, free service providing information and advice for older people and their carers about care and housing in later life. Provided jointly by Counsel and Care, Elderly Accommodation Counsel, Age Concern and Help the Aged, and NHFA Limited, the aim is to expand the options and choices older people and

their carers might consider, and provide enough information to help them decide what is right for them.

The FirstStop service provides advice on:

- care and support in the home, in specialist housing or in a care home.
- housing services to help 'stay put' or information on other more suitable options.
- finance, including paying for care, benefits and allowances, council and NHS funding, insurances, financial planning and financial products.
- rights and the law, standards to be expected and how to get what you are entitled to, including advocacy services that can support you.

Freephone: 0800 377 7070

Web: www.firststopcareadvice.org.uk

Housing Options

Housing advisory service for people with learning disabilities, their families and their supporters. This site is a comprehensive source of information about housing and related issues for people with learning disabilities. A range of factsheets and quick briefs provide families and professionals with technical information about housing are available, as well as publications and other resources written by advisors and members of Housing Options.

The Easy Read pages give an overview and introduce some of the basics about housing for people with learning disabilities. The helpline is free.

Freephone: 0845 456 1497

Web: www.housingoptions.oeg.uk



Other Useful Contacts and Information

Care and Repair England

The Renewal Trust Business Centre
3 Hawksworth Street
Nottingham NG3 2EG

Tel/Fax: 0115 950-6500
Email: Catrionasaxton@careandrepair-england.org.uk
Web: www.careandrepair-england.org.uk

Department for Children, Schools and Families

www.dcsf.gov.uk

Department of Communities and Local Government (CLG)

www.communities.gov.uk

Department of Health

www.dh.gov.uk

Department of Work and Pensions

www.dwp.gov.uk

Disabled Living Foundation

380-384 Harrow Road
London W9 2HU

Tel: 0845 1309177
Web: www.dlf.org

Foundations

National body for Home Improvement Agencies in England.
Bleaklow House
Howard Town Mill
Glossop
Derbyshire SK13 8HT

Tel: 01457 891909
Email: foundations@cel.co.uk
Website: www.foundations.uk.com

Houseproud

Run by the Home Improvement Trust, non profit organisation, in partnership with local councils throughout England, Scotland and Wales.

7 Mansfield Road
Nottingham
NG1 3FB

Tel: 0800 7837569
Web: www.hitrust.org

Housing Learning Improvement Network (LIN):

The Department of Health

Provides a range of resources and learning materials, including guidance notes and reports, factsheets, technical briefs, case studies, policy briefings, viewpoints, DVDs and CD Roms
www.dhcarenetworks.org.uk/housing



Joseph Rowntree Foundation

Research reports available on housing and disabled children.

The Homestead
40 Water End
York
North Yorkshire YO30 6WP

Tel: 01904 629241
Email: publications@jrf.org.uk
Website: www.jrf.org.uk

Living Made Easy

www.livingmadeeasy.org.uk

National Carers Strategy

http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/DH_4006522

Contact details of good practice examples

Carers Support N Wilts

41 New Road
Chippenham
Wiltshire SN15 1HL

Tel: 01249 444 110
Email: office@carersnw.co.uk
Web: www.carers.org/local/south-west/chippenham

Help and Care

The Pokesdown Centre
896 Christchurch Road
Bournemouth BH7 6DL

Tel: 0300 111 3303
Email: movingon@helpandcare.org.uk
Web: www.helpandcare.org.uk/movingon

Methodist Homes for the Aged

MHA Care Group
Epworth House
Stuart Street
Derby DE1 2EQ

Tel: 01332 296200
Email: enquiries@mha.org.uk
Web: www.methodisthomes.org.uk

Saffron Housing Association

Saffron Barn
Swan Lane
Long Strutton
Norwich NR15 2XP

Tel: 01508 532000
Email: info@saffronhousing.co.uk
Web: www.saffronhousing.co.uk



APPENDIX 1: INFORMATION ON OVERCROWDING

How Statutory Overcrowding is defined

Statutory overcrowding is defined in the Housing Act 1985. Overcrowding can be caused by having too many people in a room or by having too many people for the size of the room.

If two people of the opposite sex have to sleep in the same room the accommodation will be overcrowded unless the two people are a married or cohabiting couple, or at least one of the occupant is under ten years old.

The number of people of the same sex (unless they are a same sex couple) who can sleep in one room is restricted by the size of the room.

Space per room

Rooms that are counted include living rooms, bedrooms and large kitchens. For the space and floor area calculations:

- children under one year old are ignored.
- children under ten years old and over one count as a half.
- rooms under 50 square feet are ignored.

As a general rule:

1 room = 2 people

2 rooms = 3 people

3 rooms = 5 people

4 rooms = 7.5 people

5 or more rooms = 2 people per room

The floor area of a room also determines how many people can sleep in it:

- floor area 110 sq feet (10.2 sq metres approx) = 2 people
- floor area 90 - 109 sq ft (8.4 - 10.2 sq m approx) = 1.5 people
- floor area 70 - 89 sq ft (6.5 - 8.4 sq m approx) = 1 person
- floor area 50 - 69 sq ft (4.6 - 6.5 sq m approx) = 0.5 people

Progress is beginning to be made in building the housing needs of carers, in their own right, into housing policy and practice. However, the feedback received for this briefing raised a number of suggested areas for future work:

Crowding and Space Hazard Rating System (HHSRS)

The Housing, Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) provides an additional tool for local authorities to tackle overcrowding.

Introduced in April 2006, the HHSRS assesses the deficiencies of a home in terms of the impact on the occupiers. Local authorities use the system to assess properties for 29 health and safety hazards, one of which is crowding and space. For an outline of the idea, depending on gender mix, see

i UK Census 2001

ii In the Know, Carers UK, 2008

iii UK Census 2001

iv Carers UK/Ipsos MORI (2009) 'One million give up work to care' - Carers Rights Day

v UK Census 2001





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