

Report by Porthmadog Area Members Group regarding Accommodation and Care Needs in the Area

1.0 Background

- 1.1 At the Council meeting of 15 December 2011 a request was made “to hold transparent and thorough discussions to secure a suitable provision for the needs and aspirations of the community...”. On 21 June 2012 a further report was made regarding the intention to hold a local discussion regarding assessing accommodation and care needs in the Porthmadog area.
- 1.2 Since then a Porthmadog Area Members Group has been established which includes Councillors Selwyn Griffiths, Jason Humphreys, Alwyn Gruffydd, Stephen Churchman, Aled Evans, Eirwyn Williams, Gareth Thomas, Caerwyn Roberts, Councillor R H Wyn Williams, Social Services Cabinet Member and Councillor Paul Thomas, Provider and Leisure Cabinet Member. In addition representatives from Cymdeithas Tai Eryri, Care & Repair, Cartrefi Cymunedol Gwynedd, Age Cymru and Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board were members of the group.
- 1.3 The Group has met nine times and at those meetings have:-
- a) considered how to hold local surveys to assess accommodation and care needs in the area
 - b) approved a discussion document and questionnaire
 - c) assisted in distributing documents and holding or attend local meetings as part of the survey
 - d) received a presentation by Iwan Wyn Jones, Research Unit Manager, Gwynedd Council on the result of the assessment
 - e) considered the results and identified the main messages attached.
 - f) drawn up recommendations for the attention of Gwynedd Council.
- 1.4 This report summarizes those main messages and recommendations. Attached is a summary which has been widely distributed whilst the full results document and the original discussion document “Accommodation and Care for Elderly People in the Porthmadog Area” is at www.gwynedd.gov.uk/asesiad.

2.0 Main Messages from the Needs Assessment

- 2.1 The main messages identified by the Group are:-
- a) confirmation that people wish to live at home (74.4%)
 - b) only 44.9% feel that their home is suitable for the future

- c) the three reasons given why their present home is not suitable was:
 - too large
 - too expensive to heat
 - garden too large.

Concern was noted (63.9%) regarding living costs.

- d) the need to ensure housing choices to enable people to move to smaller houses. Housing and care 'stairs' – living at home, smaller houses, sheltered housing, extra care housing, residential and nursing homes were identified,
- e) socialising needs – 62% of respondents want opportunities to socialise with people of the same age when they are older.
- f) less than 5% beginning to prepare how they will cope when they are older.
- g) The majority (73.3%) prefer to receive personal care in their homes with the assistance of adaptations rather than go to a residential home/centre.
- h) the need for residential care in the area especially as individual's care needs increase.

2.2 The main messages were divided into three categories and responses or implementing options to be considered identified :-

- a) Stay at home
 - encourage people to invest in adaptations and expedite access to adaptations
 - how to assist with heating homes costs? Is there potential for the Council to buy cheaper energy
 - access to information of what is available? Is there an opportunity to hold events, using Mantell Gwynedd Bus?
 - assistance to live at home – enablement, telecare.
- b) Moving
 - the need for smaller houses – social housing and private homes
 - defining sheltered housing role
 - plan to reflect the change in community demography
 - expedite assistance for people to move
 - establish housing/care stairs – smaller units, sheltered housing, extra care housing and residential/nursing care.
- c) Care and Well-being Matters
 - socializing opportunities
 - transport
 - expedite people to buy services for themselves
 - the importance of early intervention – invest to gain tomorrow.

3.0 Specific Accommodation and Care Needs

3.1 The above includes a number of matters which need to be considered by various services and agencies. There was a strong opinion that attention had to be drawn to the need for housing for elderly people, especially bungalows, which would allow individuals to move to smaller units rather than go to residential care as has happened in the past.

3.2 More specifically the need for accommodation for older people and residential care in the area in the context of the future of Hafod y Gest residential home was identified.

The present situation is summarized as follows:-

- support for the existing care provision and praise to the staff
- recognition of the need to change due to the condition of the building, changing needs and increasing expectations and that the 'status quo' is not an option
- recognition that the present site is the best site for a new development.

3.3 The need for a more flexible model was considered which includes:-

- Residential care
- Intensive dementia care
- Living units which are completely independent
- Practical support to promote independence
- Community care/outreach centre
- Community and day care provision.

3.4 Following a request by the Group, Cymdeithas Tai Eryri re-visited the extra care home plans designed in 2011 and adapted the plans to include a residential unit of 10 beds. The footprint of the scheme would mean using the land on which the Madog Day Care Centre currently stood with the need to ensure new day care provision as part of the extra care housing scheme and increase the use of Encil y Coed, Criccieth.

3.5 Detailed discussions were held of what it would mean from the viewpoint of:-

- the need for a residential unit;
- cost and financing an extra care housing scheme which would include a residential unit;
- cost of running a residential unit and what it would mean to inhabitants compared to the cost to tenants in extra care housing;
- how day care can be provided through community activities.

The opportunity to create a 'community focus point' with facilities such as a café, lounges, hairdresser/shop and laundry room was also reported.

3.6 The conclusion from this discussion was agreement on the need for an unit of 10 'traditional' residential beds as part of a development of extra care housing to be built on the present site at Hafod y Gest. The Group was keen to ensure flexibility for the future which would be able to respond to needs such as the increase in the demand for dementia residential care. The development was seen to be responding to local needs and people with local connections with the area.

- 3.7 Concerns were expressed regarding the implications to residents and staff of Hafod y Gest with a desire expressed that everything should be done to minimize the effect. The Council is requested to be proactive to ensure this with specific reference to the need to arrange for residents to move together as much as possible

4.0 Conclusions and Recommendations

- 4.1 The Porthmadog area accommodation and care needs has highlighted the needs of the area and has confirmed what everyone assumed i.e. living at home is everyone's aspiration but there is a need for support when appropriate including housing for elderly people to allow this. In addition to this the need for residential care in the area was identified.
- 4.2 Specifically a conclusion was reached regarding the situation of Hafod y Gest home with recognition that the 'status quo' is not an option but there is a need for residential provision as part of a larger development of extra care housing.
- 4.3 The Porthmadog Area Members Group recommends to the Council that it should:-
- 1) Consider developing an extra care housing scheme which includes a residential care unit on the Hafod y Gest site.
 - 2) Act proactively to lessen the effect of this on the residents and staff of Hafod y Gest and users and staff of Canolfan Madog as much as possible.
 - 3) Consider how it can meet the need for older people's housing, especially bungalows' in the area.
 - 4) Give further consideration, jointly with other agencies, to the support which is available within the area which allows older people to live at home with reference to the various matters noted in para 2.2.