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Vision

The aspirations of Gwynedd's older people are clear. Gwynedd's older people want to live at home for as long as possible while recognising the need for support when appropriate to ensure this. To support these aspirations, the vision of the Adults, Health and Well-being Service emphasises promoting and maintaining independence as much as possible to enable individuals to live in their own homes. Should a situation arise where it is no longer an option for an individual to remain in their own home, other options such as Sheltered Housing, Extra Care Housing or other suitable housing will be promoted to individuals. In future residential care is mainly considered as:

- A further opportunity to regain independence
- A respite opportunity for carers so that they can continue with their caring role
- A permanent care option for those with dementia who cannot be cared for at home or in extra care housing

Therefore, the Council's vision on residential services for older people is:

- To reduce the number of traditional residential beds
- ↑ the number of beds in Extra Care Housing or similar model to Extra Care Housing
- ↑ the number of nursing beds in some areas
- ↑ the number of beds for those with memory problems; residential and nursing

Therefore, the aim of Social Services for the future is to commission:

- Less traditional residential beds, while providing more services to support individuals to live at home or in accommodation which is suitable to their circumstances
- Opportunities for people to have an extended recovery period
- Flexible opportunities to receive respite care
- More residential care beds for people with dementia

Gwynedd Council, like all other councils in Wales, faces significant cuts in terms of the funding that it receives from the government to pay for local services. At the same time, the pressure on the Council's services is sure to increase greatly. As a result of this, it is not possible for things to continue how they are, and significant changes are needed at once so that the Council can continue to provide essential services for the most vulnerable people over the coming decades.

The Older People Accommodation Strategy will outline how Gwynedd Council will ensure a suitable choice of accommodation for older people with various needs.

National and Local Context

The purpose of forming the Older People Accommodation Strategy is to ensure that Gwynedd Council and key partners work together towards the same vision and that a clear direction has been set for all partners, in the context of providing accommodation for older people in Gwynedd.

Agreeing on an Older People Accommodation Strategy was noted as a priority during 2013-2014 in **Gwynedd Council's Strategic Plan 2013-2017**. This strategy also will support priorities that have been noted in the **Gwynedd Council Housing Strategy 2013-2017**.

It has been noted in several policy documents and published research that correlation between homes and the environment in which an individual lives is key to the individual's quality of life, noting the need for a home to be suitable for adaptations as the individual gets older and his or her needs changes.

The **Better Homes for People in Wales**¹ document notes that several older people need homes that are adaptable which have good access to facilities. **Improving Lives and Communities - Homes in Wales**² acknowledges the grave challenge that we face in the field with an ageing population being noted as a significant implication on housing planning, as well as the support available for people to continue to live in their homes for as long as possible. They note the following ways to deal with this:

- i. Provide more housing of the right type and offer more choice
- ii. Improve housing and communities, including existing and new housing energy efficiency
- iii. Improve services and support associated with homes.

¹ A strategy that was published by the Welsh Government in 2001

² National housing strategy that was published in 2010

To reiterate this, the **Public Care Organisation** notes that older people want:

- A home that is easy to maintain
- To be safe
- Access to facilities and transportation
- A good neighbourhood
- Attractive accommodation which is fit for purpose
- To stay in their homes without having to go to residential care

The **Joseph Rowntree Foundation** also promotes the same concept by publishing 16 standards that aim to provide flexible and suitable homes for people with a range of disabilities.

As well as this Strategy, other documents are also being formed that feed into this document. As the Adults, Health and Well-being Service is in the process of reviewing its **Older People Commissioning Plan**, data from the **Market Situation Statement** has contributed towards this document in terms of identifying existing residential and nursing provision in Gwynedd, trends for the future and forming priorities.

In order to form this document, the research focussed on the following elements:

- Identifying trends in order to gain a clear picture
- Gaining the input of Gwynedd residents in order to have a responsive strategy
- Being able to identify areas that need brand new provision or that need to adapt provision for the future

National policy regarding Social Care and Housing for Older People focuses on three critical factors- independence, choice and supply of housing which is suitable and adequate. The Older Peoples Strategy (2013-2023) which promotes the choice and independent living and states that “there is a growing recognition of the values of developing service models that have the citizen at their core, and that seek to protect and support all opportunities for independent living”.

One of the aims of the Wales Strategy for Older People by 2023 is to ensure that older people have access to housing and services which support their needs and promotes independence; that there is an adequate supply of housing options for older people; adequate support to move; finally that an alternative model of housing

(which includes “retirement communities”, sheltered housing and extra care schemes) are offered to ensure choice for older people in the type of housing that is available which meets their needs and aspirations.

Welsh Government vision is clear. The Social Services and Welfare Act (Wales) 2014 sets a “framework for local authorities and Health to empower citizens to support them to achieve independence and welfare, and where appropriate, have the support they need.” The aim of the act is to promote independence, connect people with their communities and to reduce or delay dependency and intervention of social care and health.

It is important not to ignore the importance of supplying housing for an ageing population. A recent literature review by the University of Bangor identifies that:

- a) Housing stock in Wales is amongst the worst in Northern Europe- this can have a considerable effect on health and welfare of older people;
- b) Access to adaptations and repairs are essential to ensure that older people are able to live independently
- c) It is important to address supply and suitability of certain types of housing which meets the needs of an ageing older population
- d) 80% of land in wales is ‘rural housing’, which requires different solutions and approaches

To summaries, there is a need to ensure a supply of suitable housing for older people whilst reducing the dependency on statutory services such as residential care and hospital admissions. Currently, in Gwynedd, people are access services too early which creates a dependency on traditional care and housing, such as residential care. We do not appreciate the capacity people have to live independently, to remain at home within their communities for as long as possible.

One of the main challenges facing the Adults, Health and Welfare Department is an ageing population and the consequences of housing design and support that is available for people to live independently as long as possible. Mid year estimates for 2013 states that people over the age of 65 account for 22% of the population in Gwynedd. There are more over 65s compared to young people under 16 living in Gwynedd. Based on the population estimate, between 2015 and 2030 there will be a substantial increase in population for the over 85s in Gwynedd. It is anticipated that this Group will increase to 60% by 2030.

Another priority is to reduce the need for traditional care, such as residential care, and to develop a model of care which includes Extra Care Housing.

As part of Gwynedd’ s 3 year Strategic Plan, developing an Older Peoples Accommodation Strategy for Older People has been identified as a work plan under

the Accommodation Board. The Strategy will sit within the Gwynedd Housing Partnership Strategy and will feed into the Local Development Plan in 2016, Unitary Plan (2013-17) as well as the Commissioning Plan for Older People 2011-16.

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Population Trends

Based on estimates³, 121,911 people live in Gwynedd. For the first time, there are more people aged 65 and over living in Gwynedd compared with young people under 16. There are 14,277 people aged 65-74, 8,688 people aged 75-84 and 3,707 people aged over 85. Based on existing estimates⁴, between 2015 and 2030, the main growth in population is amongst the group aged 85 and over. It is expected for this age group in Gwynedd to increase 59% by 2030, with the 75-84 age group increasing by 27%. However, the 65-74 age group is expected to gradually decrease by 2030.

When looking at the population in Gwynedd, it became apparent that the same areas were consistently at the top of the list in terms of the highest density of older people in the population and/or the highest numbers of older people, and that in the 75-84 and 85+ age groups. Looking at the constitution of homes in these areas, several were at the top of the table in terms of single person homes or families aged over 65.

Something to note is that these areas are in general popular coastal areas, and there is a suggestion that several people choose to return to these areas to retire. It is necessary to take this into account when considering accommodation options and planning services in Gwynedd, as there is an assumption that older people live far from any support network.

Evaluation of the projections of dementia numbers in Gwynedd

Older people tend to suffer more with mental health problems. This can, in turn, affect the independence and quality of life of individuals and their families. The two main mental health conditions that affect older people are dementia and operational disorders such as depression and anxiety.

Collected data predicts that the numbers of older people aged 65+ who suffer with dementia in Gwynedd will increase in the next years from 1,863 in 2013 to 2,115 in 2020 and then to 2,664 by 2030⁵.

³ 2013 Stats Wales mid-year estimates

⁴ Daffodil Estimates www.daffodilcymru.org.uk

⁵ Daffodil Estimates www.daffodilcymru.org.uk

Internal migration

Only a small number of internal migration within Gwynedd occurs when compared with the population. A small increase has been seen during the last decade, increasing from 110 people migrating into Gwynedd in 2001-2002 to 130 people in 2012-2013⁶.

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⁶ Stats Wales

Current provision

Housing tenures and condition

In terms of tenures in Gwynedd, data from the 2011 census was looked at and it became apparent that 26.4% of households in Gwynedd house people aged 65+ only, 21.6% of Arfon households, 30.6% of Dwyfor households and 26.4% of Meirionnydd households.

According to data⁷ regarding the tenures of Gwynedd housing, 76% of people aged 65 and over are owners/occupants, 13% are owned by the local authority, 6% are owned by housing associations and 5% are privately rented.

Our data shows that 1,659 of people aged 65 and over live in homes without central heating, which corresponds to 6.82% of the older population.

The suitability of some houses make it difficult to have the provision of appropriate medical provisions / beds.

Existing Sheltered Housing and Extra Care Housing provision in Gwynedd

- The Gwynedd Housing Partnership has a total of 24 Sheltered Housing schemes, which include 689 individual units.
- 3 of Gwynedd's Housing Partners own Sheltered Housing schemes in Gwynedd. Cartrefi Cymunedol Gwynedd is the largest provider with 13 schemes, 10 by the Cynefin Group and 1 by the North Wales Housing Association.
- In terms of location, Arfon is the area with the most Sheltered Housing Provision with 10 schemes and 194 (47%) units, Meirionnydd has 9 schemes and 173 (42%) units and Dwyfor has 5 schemes and 46 (11%) units.
- 2 Extra Care Housing schemes are in operation in Gwynedd, with 30 units at Awel y Coleg in Bala and 42 units in Cae Garnedd in Bangor. There will be a 40 unit scheme in Porthmadog by the end of 2017.

Many of the Sheltered Schemes offer security and peace of mind to its tenants and family members. This is mainly due to warden services being made available as well

⁷ Office for National Statistics

as some schemes hosting social activities for their residents. Supporting People Grant provides a vital funding for these schemes. Currently, Supporting People budgets which are administered to Local Authorities are facing substantial cuts, as much as 10% during 2014-15. Whilst preserving front line services is paramount no assurance can be given that sheltered schemes will not be immune from further cuts in the future. This Strategy offers an unique opportunity to work with our Housing Partners to pursue a different model in Gwynedd.

Developing Extra Care Housing has been included as an aim within the **Council's Strategic Plan**. We are collaborating with the Cynefin Group and North Wales Housing Association to develop homes that are suitable for busy older people, adapting the support as their needs change as they age. We will work together to develop and consider other options in terms of developing and funding provision for the future in other areas, including looking at Sheltered Housing that belongs to Housing Associations.

Extra Care Housing is still seen as a relatively new concept in Gwynedd, the two current schemes have proved popular with it's residents but promoting the aims and potential benefits remain a challenge. One thing is clear; being able to offer the same level of on site complex in terms of size and provision of activities for residents will be challenging. Again, this Strategy offers an opportunity to develop a extra care 'light' approach in Gwynedd by utilising existing stock of sheltered schemes and smaller more bespoke facilities within rural areas.

A summary of the existing Residential and Nursing care provision in Gwynedd

- There are 37 Residential and Nursing Homes in Gwynedd. There are 26 homes within the private sector, and 11 homes which are part of the Council's internal provision
- Nursing care is provided by the private sector only, and 16 homes include Nursing beds
- 16 homes are located in the Arfon area, 11 in Dwyfor and 8 in Meirionnydd
- There is a total of 1,108 residential or nursing beds in Gwynedd; 790 beds within the private sector and 318 beds within the council's homes

- There are 539 residential beds, 95 EMI residential beds, 356 nursing beds and 118 EMI nursing beds
- On 31 July 2014, 94% of the residential and/or nursing beds in Gwynedd were full. There were 68 surplus beds available within the County
- There were no surplus Residential or EMI Nursing beds in the Meirionnydd area on 31 July 2014
- There were 49 (6%) surplus beds within the private sector and 19 (6%) surplus beds within the Council's homes.

At the end of 2013/14, an average of 25.59 people per 1,000 of the population of people over 65 years old were supported in a residential or nursing home. Wales' average was 19.84.

Other Local Authorities

As part of our research, data from nearby local authorities was looked at, comparing the accommodation stock that exists within them. In general, Anglesey and Conwy provide many more SH and ECH units or residential and nursing beds for older people in Gwynedd and Ceredigion.

Across the entire age range that was looked at (65-74, 75-84 and 85+) Ceredigion offers more Sheltered Housing units, with Gwynedd offering more Extra Care Housing Units and residential and nursing beds.

Engagement and collaboration with partners and stakeholders

Engagement with key partners

Following a presentation to the **Gwynedd Housing Partnership** which outlined our intention in creating this strategy, they expressed interest in being involved with the project from the beginning, working with us to identify strategic results and to form solutions and an action plan as part of the strategy.

Also, all **Gwynedd Community Councils** were contacted, and 9 Councils sent a response. The results of a questionnaire which was recently distributed by Felinheli Community Council⁸ was received.

Several organisations that were relevant to this work were also contacted. A useful report from the **RNIB Homes for People with dementia and sight loss** was received, and specific guidelines were received via email from the **Alzheimer's Assocation** offering observations on adaptations to provide for people with dementia. These can be seen in Appendix B and Appendix C. Also, a response was received from **Canllaw**, which focusses on enabling vulnerable older people to live safely and independently in the community.

Engaging with existing and potential service users

As part of our engagement work, focus groups were arranged with **Age Cymru** area forums in Gwynedd, the **Gwynedd Older People Council** and the **Gwynedd Core Disability Equality Group**.

Main messages from the engagement work

-a vast majority of those who took part in the focus groups noted that their existing home was suitable for their needs now, with several stating that adaptations had been made to make them suitable.

-several acknowledged that it is likely that their current homes would not be suitable should their health deteriorate.

-the main barriers that were identified was a large garden, maintenance costs, stairs at the home and a bathroom on the first floor.

-there was a consensus amongst the groups that making the decision to move from your existing home was a very difficult one, as several had lived in their current homes for years.

⁸ See all observations that were received in Appendix A.

-only a small few had considered their accommodation situation for the future, with acknowledgement that people often were not willing to take it seriously until it became a problem.

-most of those who took part believed that they would prefer to move to Extra Care Housing rather than a Residential Home

-several were concerned about dementia provision within the county, and this was most prominent in Meirionnydd.

-in general, people's wishes were to stay as close as possible to their current homes, as they had a network of people and a community there.

-it became clear that people were unaware of the accommodation options that exist in Gwynedd, and were also unaware of the preventative services that are offered.

-need to consider the needs of older people with disabilities when planning new developments.

-it was interesting to note that some from the area of Bangor had considered Extra Care Housing in light of publicity regarding the new development in the area.

-the response of several Community Councils discussed the need for affordable one/two bedroom single storey housing (especially in the rural area of Dwyfor).

-the Community Councils emphasised the importance of having a range of accommodation options on a local scale, so that people do not have to move to a strange location.

-several drew attention to the provision of suitable accommodation for people with dementia within the county.

Identify specific areas

When analysing the data, it became clear that some areas were at the top in several fields, and therefore these areas were looked at in more detail, looking at how the 65-74, 75-84 and 85+ age groups (percentages and numbers) stand at present, an estimate for the future and the trends of the past. Also, the constitution of the homes of people aged 65+ in these areas was looked at, predictions of dementia numbers, accommodation stock in these areas and travelling distances to residential and nursing homes.

When looking at population data only, there were 10 LSOAs⁹ at the top, but when we added and compared more data, 8 LSOAs were consistently at the top of the list. The 8 LSOAs were:

- Tywyn 1
- Porthmadog (West)
- Aberdaron Botwnnog and Tudweiliog
- Dyffryn Ardudwy, Llanbedr,
- Aberdyfi Brynchrug and Llanfihangel,
- Llanbedrog and Abersoch
- Llanbedr
- Caernarfon (Menai)

It is possible to combine some of the areas geographical:

- Dyffryn Ardudwy and Llanbedr
- Tywyn and Aberdyfi, Brynchrug and Llanfihangel
- Aberdaron, Botwnnog, Tudweiliog and Llanbedrog and Abersoch

⁹ Local Super Output Area

Main messages

1. Support individuals to stay in their homes as long as possible

What we hope to achieve is:

- Encourage people to consider and to plan their accommodation wishes sooner
- Make older people's homes appropriate for them to be able to stay in their homes when suitable and possible
- Promote the use of equipment and possible adaptations e.g. telecare equipment
- Retain respite care provision / temporary beds within the County

2. Ensure suitable accommodation for Gwynedd's older people

In line with supporting older people to stay in their homes, we are going to ensure that there is a range of accommodation options available for Gwynedd's older people.

What we hope to achieve is:

- Ensure that full use is made of the Sheltered Housing provision that exists in the County
- Increase the Extra Care Housing or similar provision within the county
- Reduce the need for beds in the County's residential homes by implementing on the above. Following a likely increase in demand, it will be necessary to consider increasing the general nursing accommodation provision

- Following a likely increase in demand, it will be necessary to research increasing the EMI nursing care accommodation provision

3. Find specific geographical areas where it is likely that the demand will be high

What we hope to achieve is:

- Investigate the possibility of creating specific plans to the following areas in light of being identified as areas to prioritise in terms of developing accommodation options:
 - Dyffryn Ardudwy and Llanbedr
 - Tywyn and Aberdyfi, Brynchrug and Llanfihangel
 - Aberdaron, Botwnnog, Tudweiliog and Llanbedrog and Abersoch

Hold a discussion with partners to discuss and co-plan accommodation provision within the County

4. Ensure that Gwynedd's older people are aware of the accommodation options that exist within the County and that accessible information is available.

What we hope to achieve is:

- Improve the quality and provision of information by ensuring that accessible information is available for people regarding all accommodation options for the older people of Gwynedd along with accommodation adaptations.
- Collaborate with relevant partners to form and distribute this information

Action Plan February 2016 – February 2017

In order to develop an action plan which is achievable and inclusive the following is recommended as the first action:

- Arrange a discussion session with Gwynedd Housing Partnerships to discuss the main messages with them
- Hold a discussion with partners within the health field

The action plan is an example / discussion point on formulating the comprehensive action plan:

Aim	Action	Responsible Officer / Group	Timetable	Progress
Support individuals to stay in their homes as long as possible				
Increase awareness of options for older people amongst professional staff within health and care	Promote choices for older people	Frontline officers	Continuously	
Ensure that Extra Care Housing provision is available in Arfon, Dwyfor and Meirionnydd	Ensure that Porthmadog's Extra Care Housing Scheme is built in to the timetable	Hafod y Gest Operational Group	Until Hafod Y Gest has been allocated	Work to commence on site February 2016 with work programme in place for the Operational Group
Offer the warden service that Housing Associations have to individuals within the widespread community	CCG to lead on impact assessment	Deputy Director CCG	To be decided by CCG	
The role of health and social services, namely step-up-step-	Strategic Health and Housing 2025 Group	Strategic North Wales		

down provision / intermediate care and co-commissioning		Group 2025		
Telecare - that the appropriate type of equipment is offered in order to maintain independence	Vision review of Telecare by Canllaw	Canllaw	Present report in June	
Offer a 'move to smaller properties' scheme in cooperation with the Housing Associations and Canllaw	Housing Officers within Housing Association encourage older tenants to move to sheltered housing or ECH Develop a business case to provide a Commercial move on service in the County by Canllaw	Social Landlords and Canllaw		Receive statistics on a yearly basis
Find specific geographical areas where it is likely that the demand will be high				
-Conduct further research to the areas with the highest density of older people	Housing and Social Services to identify 3-4 areas of priority with the intention of collating data qualitative data on service demand in the area	Commissioning Officer and Strategic Housing Manager	Within 1 month	
Identify options in terms of provision in the areas that have the highest density	Establish a task and finish group to identify areas of priority for provision in the future	Housing Partnership	Report to Housing Partnership within 6 months	
Ensure suitable accommodation for Gwynedd's older people				
Create a position statement in terms of housing and care provision in the County	Task and Finish Group to create a position statement	Accommodation Board and Housing		

		Partnership		
Create a service standard and principles for sheltered housing in the County, based on the Extra Care Housing model	To synchronize standards across the Housing Association	Housing Partnership	Within 3 months	
Nursing / EMI care accommodation provision	Regional work occurring to establish a commissioning hub that will give guidance on how we can influence the private market in some areas	Regional Group	Every 2 months	
Ensure that Gwynedd's older people are aware of the accommodation options that exist within the County and that accessible information is available				
Ensure that information regarding accommodation options e.g. SH and ECH is available for Gwynedd's older people	Review and update the information sheet	Housing Partnership	Within 3 months	Information sheet available and shared with relevant groups / organisations