

Family survey on the Royal Borough of Greenwich draft Housing Strategy themes





About this survey

This is a survey for people with a learning disability, families and other voluntary groups on the key points we think should be in the learning disability housing strategy.

We shared some of this with families at our recent event at Charlton Athletic Football Club on 15 February 2017.

We want to get your views on whether we have the right things in the strategy if there are things you disagree with or if there are things you think we have missed.

There are 11 points to consider in this survey. It should not take long to complete.

Please return the survey in the freepost envelope by Friday 21 April 2017.

1 Increasing the number of homes for people with a learning disability

The issue

There are two connected issues here:

- How to get information about housing together with support. Families find the current process very difficult.
- GLH doesn't think social care departments have enough specialist skills and experience across their teams to deliver right housing solutions.

The solution

- GLH will help the Royal Borough of Greenwich (RBG) develop the housing skills, experience and capability to deliver future housing solutions.
- With the help of RBG's housing department, GLH will help social care develop the information advice, guidance and support it can offer to families and make it much easier for people to understand the process. We will do this by working with families and helping them make a plan for the future with RBG.

Do you agree with the issue and our solutions for it? *

Yes Partially No

2 Making a housing plan for the future

The issue

- Families have little information about how the housing and support 'system' works and how they can plan ahead. Many fear the future, not knowing what might happen next.

The solution

- We think all families who currently care for their loved one's at home should be encouraged and helped to make a plan for their future housing and support needs.

- Families who are home owners have choices about how to plan for the future using discretionary trusts etc.
- GLH think that social care, the council's housing department and their housing association partners should agree how best to make similar arrangements for tenants of social housing.
- We can't do everyone at once so we think we should prioritise the most elderly or those with frail carers in both home ownership and social renting to be supported to help make a plan.

Do you agree with the issue and our solutions for it? *

Yes Partially No

The next section is about the current RBG commissioned accommodation for people with a learning disability

Our starting point was to understand how well the property meets the current and future needs of the people who live there now and those who might reasonably be expected to need the accommodation in the future. We visited residents, staff and families at each of the homes.

The process for the next phase of the strategy is to work with service users and families in their individual circumstances to understand at an individual level what their housing needs are both now and in the future.

People are naturally very anxious about the future and have asked us for our initial views about the properties. Being open and transparent we have given people our view but at this stage we don't have the complete picture of people's individual needs.

Based on our series of brief visits across the RBG properties from MCCH and GLO, we believe the following to be true:

- There are properties which can meet the current needs of the residents and potential future residents. Catch up maintenance or modest investment is required.
- There are properties which can meet the current and future needs of the residents, however, significant investment is required to make it suitable for the future. Within this category are properties which do not meet the needs of the current client group but would meet the needs of another client group with different needs in the future.
- There are properties that cannot meet the current and future needs of the residents and suitable replacement accommodation needs to be provided. We think a very small number fall into this category.
- We have yet to review all the data and the future needs however we anticipate that the outcome of this process will be a need for new additional accommodation as well as investment in current accommodation.

In the accommodation we visited the two other main points are:

- There are a very high proportion of elderly people with a learning disability.
- The locations of the properties were good and very highly valued by residents, families and staff.

3 Housing for people with a learning disability who are elderly

The issue

- Many of the issues with the current accommodation are due to the very large number of elderly people living in the accommodation approximately 50% are over 50 years old. Problems of accessibility and aging mean that for many the current accommodation does not meet their needs.

The solution

- We would like to explore with individuals, families and the council the development of new specialist services for elderly people with a learning disability. We do not wish to follow a care home model (but you may have other views).
- The council has some sheltered accommodation which might be suitable to be adapted to the needs of a range of elderly people with a learning disability. Most of the sheltered accommodation at these sites would continue to be used by non learning disabled elderly people as usual. People who moved there could take their staff with them if they wanted to.

Do you agree with the issue and our solutions for it? *

Yes Partially No

4 Changes to the current accommodation refurbishing and reproviding support/care services

The issue

People are worried about:

- The very small number of properties we think cannot meet the needs of the current tenants or indeed future tenants even with refurbishment.
- The upheaval of having major building works done to properties that need improvement especially if that means people have to move out temporarily.

The solution

- Our promise was to be honest with you. We will need to create replacement accommodation and support for anyone affected. The council must provide suitable alternatives either for the long term or temporarily. Nobody will be made homeless, returned to their family or sent out of the borough.
- We think we should talk to individuals and families about this first. People might need advocates to help them. We think we will need to show people what the alternatives look like so people can see what is being proposed.

Do you agree with the issue and our solutions for it? *

Yes Partially No

5 More accommodation and different accommodation is needed

The issue

- We have over 100 people placed in homes out of RGB because there is not enough accommodation in the borough.

The solution

Create the following accommodation:

- Housing for younger people with complex needs. There are a small predictable number of people each year that will need fairly specialist accommodation. People who are inappropriately placed and/or are living outside the borough and may wish to return. Some are in neighbouring London boroughs and so are quite close by in other cases, people's families have also moved out of the borough to be nearer them. We will concentrate on those who have moved most recently and where quality and cost of the service they receive are of concern.

- Move-on accommodation for people who want to move (with support) to be more independent.
- Housing for people with a mild to moderate learning disability who are on the borderline of qualifying for adult social care – there is more about this in the next section.
- More accommodation in areas set to increase in population significantly, such as Eltham.
- We think the current shared lives scheme is capable of expansion and it might be an option that will appeal to some of the people living with elderly carers who make a plan for the future as mentioned earlier in this survey.

Do you agree with the issue and our solutions for it? *

Yes Partially No

6 Landlords' performance

The issue

- Robert Danie Is the Peoples' Parliament MP brought this to our attention when GLH first came to Greenwich. Some of the properties have not been maintained very well. This was also an issue for some properties we visited.

The solution

- There are two landlords in particular where maintenance was an issue. We need landlords who have money to invest in refurbishing the properties to make them fit for the future. We will try to introduce other landlords.

Do you agree with the issue and our solutions for it? *

Yes Partially No

7 Supported living

The issue

- The majority of the accommodation we visited are registered care homes. This is surprising as many of the properties were ordinary houses or bungalows. GLH's experience is that elsewhere most of these types of services have deregistered as a care home and transferred to supported living arrangements.
- GLH believe supported living when done well has two distinct advantages over registered care:
 1. People in supported living have a tenancy and housing rights.
 2. People in supported living have a full range of benefits like everyone else including Housing Benefit.
- This means that in supported living the cost of providing the accommodation is paid for by central government up to a local limit of about £160-£200 per person per week whereas in residential care these costs are paid for by RBG.

The solution

- We see no reason why the process of transferring to a supported living model should not start very quickly. It is not a case of simply changing the 'labels' but recognising people have rights and are treated as citizens in their own right. Neither is it a process that will happen overnight. We would ask people to have a look at the Feeling Settled report carried out by NDTI:

www.glh.org.uk/feeling-settled-report

- We also think that there may be some cost savings to RBG. Any savings will be re invested in other learning disability services.

Do you agree with the issue and our solutions for it? *

Yes Partially No

8 New housing developments

The issue

- Each year there are a small number of young people with a learning disability with very complex support needs who become adults and need specialist housing and support.
- This is a relatively small but predictable number based on information from children's services. They are far more likely to be sent out of borough. We will therefore need to develop a small number of specialist housing solutions as part of our affordable social housing development.

The solution

- We will need to develop a small number of specialist housing solutions as part of our affordable social housing development for people with complex and intensive needs. Not all affordable housing developments will be suitable for this type of development. Design, aspect and privacy issues must be carefully handled.

Do you agree with the issue and our solutions for it? *

Yes Partially No

The issue

- Many people with a learning disability do not meet the threshold for adult social care. It is regrettable but is it the current reality we have to deal with.
- We would like the strategy to be able to offer accommodation to people with a learning disability as citizens like any other.
- Like any other citizen on a low wage or on benefits, social housing is in very short supply and is not available to everyone who needs it. We do not think it is realistic to tell people that everyone who wants this sort of accommodation will get it. Far from it. However, that does not mean none should be provided.
- We are also concerned about people living without enough support so we need to find a solution that will be low cost and safe.

The solution

We think there are three ways of achieving this:

- Access to existing mainstream social lettings based on the model the council’s housing department and mental health colleagues have developed with support being provided by Keyring type services which are very cost effective. We think we should aim to cluster these together in the same location and close to existing staffed homes.
- Earlier we highlighted the need to provide new learning disability supported housing projects for people with high and intensive needs. Where these projects are developed we will also include where possible, an additional number of self contained flats for people who are more able but where support can be provided from the nearby accommodation when needed.
- We would also like to explore opportunities for housing to be provided alongside employment/ apprenticeships and training. There are few schemes nationwide currently offering this type of service and none in London that we know of.

Do you agree with the issue and our solutions for it? *

Yes Partially No

10 The difficulty of getting an additional bedroom for those who are unable to share

The issue

- Trying to get social housing with an additional bedroom for instance, if your son or daughter has to share a bedroom with a sibling with autism or other learning disability can be a challenge.
- Larger properties are in very short supply and are in high demand by a very wide range of people with disabilities and health related issues.
- If a family who wish to carry on caring for their loved one with a learning disability at home are unable to do so because of their housing circumstances, then the alternative for the borough is very expensive indeed.
- A life time's cost in staffed accommodation costing an average of £50,000 per year over say 40 years, it will cost the authority £2 million per person at today's social care prices.

The solution

- Many families can manage if they know there is light at the end of the tunnel.
- We would like to take the advice of RGB's housing department including what, if any, opportunities there are for setting aside properties on new developments for specific families in this situation.

Do you agree with the issue and our solutions for it? *

Yes Partially No

11 Adaptations to the home

Families have told us how much they appreciate and value having adaptations done to their home which makes it easier to continue care for their loved ones at home regardless of their age.

We have asked for feedback on our other surveys about your experiences of getting adaptations.

What are your views on what needs to happen to ensure people can get adaptations to stay where they are happy? *

Your details

It would be very helpful if you are able to leave your name and contact details – we may need to ask for more detail. This will be held confidentially and only used to understand who is responding i.e agencies, parents, service users etc.

You are:

Service user Parent Voluntary agency

Other - please specify

Name

Address

Phone number

Email address

Thank you for taking part in this survey. Please send it back in the freepost envelope by 21 April 2017.

We will send out the results and you will also be able to find them on our website:

www.glh.org.uk/partnership

Get in touch

For advice and information you can get in touch with **Golden Lane Housing**.

You can ring us on **0300 003 7007**

You can write to us at:

**Golden Lane Housing
West Point
501 Chester Road
Manchester
M16 9HU**

Email **enquiries@glh.org.uk**

The website is at **www.glh.org.uk**

Follow us on Twitter **[@GoldenLaneHouse](https://twitter.com/GoldenLaneHouse)**