

# A lifeline for lifetime independence - Supported housing for people with learning disabilities and autistic people in England.

The supported housing sector provides positive opportunities for people with learning disabilities and autistic people to live independently in their communities. The Learning Disability and Autism Housing Network (LDAH) commissioned Housing LIN to carry out research into an accurate current evidence base covering the scale, size, scope, and funding/cost of supported housing for people with learning disabilities and autistic people.

## The research found that:

- Good quality, adapted and sustainable supported housing plays an increasingly important role in enabling people with a learning disability and autistic people live independently at the heart of their communities.
- Between 35,000 to 38,500 adults with a learning disability and autistic people aged 18 years and over in England live in supported housing.
- There is a potential housing timebomb of people living with older carers.
- Over 80% of supported housing for people with learning disabilities and autistic people in England is provided by Registered Providers of social housing.
- This type of supported housing provides high levels of care and support, with 43% receiving 100+ hours per week.
- The long term sustainability of the sector is greatly reliant on the continued payment of higher levels of housing benefit for rent and service charges, with around 31,000 people with learning disabilities and autistic people receiving exempt payments.
- A rigid and inflexible housing capital grant funding social rent regime has resulted in more and more housing being funded by private finance, and with limited public subsidy.

# 5,600

new supported housing units developed in last 5 years with limited grant funding.

# 35,000+

people live in supported housing with care and support.



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# Our key recommendations

## The Government should:

- Increase the level of capital funding and provide feasible grant levels available through the Affordable Homes Programme and Care and Support Specialised Housing Fund.
- Ensure Homes England, Greater London Authority and the Department of Health and Social Care set annual targets for supported housing for people with learning disabilities and autistic people from the different capital programmes and regularly publish the number and type of schemes funded.
- Reform the Rent Standard in relation to supported housing and public subsidy, allowing payment of Homes England grant with the charging of appropriate rents above current formula rents.
- Maintain the current housing benefit regime, given that around 83% of supported housing for people with a learning disability and autistic people rely on this funding.
- Ensure any new oversight regime is proportionate, and focus should be on consistent, benchmarked support and housing service measures for people living in supported exempt accommodation.

**1,800+**  
units a year needed in  
England based on provision  
and demand

## Local government should:

- Develop and publish a strategy for the future provision of supported housing, every five years.
- Collaboratively plan for further development of supported housing to meet the different needs of people with learning disabilities and autistic people.
- Work more strategically with housing and support providers to ensure the current provision of supported housing is more fully utilised and reduce the level of under occupancy across the sector.

## There is also a critical role for supported housing providers. They should:

- Work in partnership with local authorities to help plan supported housing to meet needs of people with learning disabilities and autistic people.
- Exceed minimum quality support and housing services standards set by legislation.
- Ensure full transparency in terms of the costs of providing supported housing.
- Evidence the value for money, good quality specialist adapted housing for people with learning disabilities and autistic people provides.

**£340m+**  
capital investment from public  
and private finance needed  
each year to meet need



Find out more about the LDAHN