



**AGEING WELL
- OUR OLDER
PERSONS
STRATEGY
2015 - 2018**

DOCUMENT CONTROL

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1. Introduction /Strategic Vision

Meeting the needs of older people living in our homes is a priority for RBH. Over a quarter of our tenants are over 65. Demographic change is leading to an ageing population, with changing needs and aspirations. RBH services must be designed to meet this challenge, building on our existing provision. There are opportunities to meet the needs of our tenants and future tenants through improved partnership working, use of assistive technology and by seeking out funding opportunities. We also have an ambition to develop our services, potentially offering a range of services to all older people in the borough and expanding the range of provision we currently provide.

Older people cannot be seen as one homogenous group, there is great diversity within this broad group. It is important that services are developed which treat everyone as individuals, and a range of options are provided to meet their needs.

This strategy outlines RBH's ambitions to become a leading service provider to older people in the borough and to become a provider of choice and exemplar to other housing providers. It builds on the high quality current service provision and the exciting opportunities, including the launch of the mutual's first extra care provision at Hare Hill, opening in April 2015.

2. Methodology

This draft strategy has been developed using a range of approaches including:

- An independent review of the supported housing service, which included a survey to over 400 tenants and 100 tenants attending an appreciative enquiry event.
- Undertaking detailed research into demographic change and health inequalities in the borough and nationally.
- Considering best practice from other housing providers.
- Meeting key partners such as RMBC and Health Providers and understanding their needs.
- Involving tenants and members through consulting with the Operations Group of Sheltered Housing in Partnership and the Services for All Continuous Improvement Group.
- Discussions at Board on the key principles and approach for this strategy.
- Discussion and approval at Representative Body.

This strategy aims to feed into RBH's Our Mutual Future Corporate Strategy 2015-18, particularly Objective 2, Supporting People and Places.

3. Strategic Aims

The key aims for RBH outlined in this strategy are to:

- Ensure that our tenants receive a vibrant and high quality service which promotes independent living and ensures that our tenants stay active, healthy and safe.
- Support RBH tenants and other residents of the borough to live in their home in safety and comfort.
- Understand and meet the needs and aspirations of tenants and future customers.
- Expand on our extra care provision, following our scheme opening at Hare Hill.
- Explore future service provision, including the potential to offer care services.
- Work effectively in partnership to seek new funding opportunities and provide new services to meet the needs of older people in the borough.
- Ensure effective investment to make the best use of our assets.
- Continue to demonstrate Value for Money to RBH and partner agencies.

4. Key Principles

The key principles within this strategy are:

- RBH will aim high- provide a service of which we and our customers can be proud.
- RBH will continue to prioritise services for older people, whether living in independent living schemes or general needs housing.
- Service delivery will continue to meet the vision and values of RBH.
- RBH will make the best use of our homes.
- The supported housing service will stay financially secure and operate in a commercially aware manner.
- We will extend our influence in the borough through discussion and partnerships with key decision makers.
- Decisions will be made based on strong evidence.
- To be fleet of foot - to look for funding and partnering opportunities which fit with RBH values and the aims of this Strategy
- To treat each tenant as an individual and to recognise the multiplicity of needs within older people
- To work with tenants and service users on the development of all our services

5. Consistency with our Values

Responsibility - We take responsibility for, and answer for, our actions.

RBH provide housing for over 13500 tenants, including over 4000 older people and we take that responsibility seriously. We must ensure that the range of services we

provide meet the needs of our older tenants. There is a responsibility to ensure services provide value for money, the independent living schemes remain fit for purpose and financially viable for the long term. Decisions on future investment need to consider the financial viability of each scheme as well as the needs of the existing residents.

RBH have a responsibility to understand and respond to the needs of our tenants, particularly in the light of cuts to other services, and to work with others to try to fill the gaps in service provision where possible.

Equity – We will run our mutual in a way that is fair and unbiased.

For our Older Persons Strategy, this means that our services must be delivered in a fair, consistent and unbiased way. We will have clear policies and procedures and ensure our employees are fully trained to deliver our services. We will monitor our service provision to make sure we are not disadvantaging particular groups within our communities.

Democracy – Members have a say in how RBH is run.

This strategy will be approved by our Representative Body who will also monitor the high level delivery plans. The detail of delivery will be monitored by the appropriate customer panels, including the Sheltered Housing in Partnership operations group. Members and tenants will be involved in local decisions around priorities and service provision.

Residents have a strong voice in the delivery of the service through the Sheltered Housing in Partnership Group, made up of representatives from each scheme.

Pioneering – Together we will seek to be leaders in the way we meet challenges and solutions.

We know that our communities face some big challenges, particularly in light of wider cuts in services, an ageing population and people living longer with a variety of needs. This strategy calls for RBH to be a leader in service provision for older people, both in the buildings and the services we provide, or support others to provide, for tenants and potentially other residents of the borough. We will seek to demonstrate and maximise social value from our work and be open to innovative solutions, actively seeking out best practice in the sector and new opportunities.

Open & Honest – We will share information, do what we say we will do and when we make a mistake we will own up to it.

RBH will continue to communicate effectively with tenants through a range of approaches. Sometimes we may need to make difficult decisions, but we will use strong evidence to make these decisions, consult with tenants and explain clearly why they have to be made.

Where difficulties or problems are flagged to us we will seek to respond quickly and if we have made a mistake, acknowledge this, put it right and learn for the future.

Caring – We will listen and respond to the needs of our members, tenants and employees.

We recognise that the service we provide is to some of RBH's longest standing tenants, some of whom could be facing health concerns or struggling to maintain their home. Our services must be designed to meet the needs of those people fully. We also know that our older tenants have active, fulfilling lives, and are fully involved in the activities and events supported by RBH and other partners. We need to ensure that we do not stereotype individuals. Older people have an enormous amount they can contribute, both to RBH and to other tenants and this should be recognized and built on.

Championing – We will seek to reduce economic inequality within our communities.

RBH will continue to champion the needs of some of our oldest and longest serving residents and give them the opportunity to champion their cause through membership and engagement opportunities. We support them to engage with services such as CIRCLE and provide a range of activities in our schemes to promote health and wellbeing through our activities co-ordinator. We also work on behalf of our tenants to ensure they are kept safe.

Ensuring value for money

All decisions on service provision need to ensure value for money, taking into account financial considerations and the wider social value to tenants and partners of the services we provide. There is a value directly to tenants living in a safe, secure, warm home with someone to respond to them if they need help. It is very difficult to place a value on this, but from the positive response to the service from our tenants, we know how important this is.

RBH will consider value for money as part of the decision to invest in our independent living schemes, which need to be maintained to a high standard. All investment decisions need to consider future demand, potential future use of any asset and future investment requirements.

RBH will report on and share the savings provided to partner agencies for the services we provide and map the social return to tenants and partners as part of our value for money assessments. This links to the funding received from Adult Social Care for our services. For example, the Community Warden Service prevents emergency ambulance call outs, making a considerable saving to the NHS and freeing up that resource to respond to other emergencies. RBH will take account of these savings in deciding on appropriate levels of charging and the intrinsic value in providing these services directly to RBH tenants.

6. Background

The independent living service operates in a changing external environment; some key factors include:

- Demographic change –people are living longer, often with higher and more complex needs.
- Older people’s aspirations are changing, as the baby boom generation reaches retirement.
- The Care Act introduces new duties for Councils but also has implications for RBH. Partners including RBH will have a duty to co-operate with councils.
- There is continued pressure on funding streams, with a continued reduction of Adult Social Care Funding.
- Improvements in assistive technology present opportunities and challenges in assisting tenants to become more comfortable with this technology.
- Customers living in our communities face the challenge of growing needs and wider cuts to services following the austerity programme, without the levels of support provided in independent living schemes.

There is a range of information available which demonstrates the impact of the ageing population both on the borough and nationally.

- In Rochdale, it is expected there will be an increase of people aged over 65 by 26% by 2025 and a 30% increase in those aged over 80 in the same period.
- The BME population is expected to grow at larger than average rates over this period.
- The majority of older people still own their own home.
- Older people in Rochdale are likely to be worse off than both the national and North West averages.
- The total care needs for the borough are expected to increase by 49% by 2029.
- There is an estimated 2211 people living with dementia in the Borough, which is expected to increase to 2968 by 2025. Rochdale is 2.7 times above the national average for people with dementia presenting at GP surgeries.

RBH have a high number of older people living in our homes. In total over a quarter of RBH tenants are aged 65 and over, compared to an overall average for the borough of 14.6%. The review into the Independent Living Service found that compared to other service providers, there is a higher proportion of tenants with high or medium needs than expected. This places additional importance on the support service provided by RBH to help maintain tenancies.

The independent living service is popular with our tenants, with 99% of tenants surveyed in 2014 happy with the home they are living in, 92% satisfied with the service of the warden and 89% satisfied with their local community.

Funding opportunities for supported housing is moving from being Local Authority led to health led. It is important to work towards the priorities of both Rochdale Council and health providers and to be able to demonstrate our value. Priorities for commissioners are:

- Preventing inappropriate and unnecessary hospital admission
- Ensuring a smooth move-on from hospital and reducing bed blocking.
- Signposting to preventative services
- Reducing admission to residential care
- Making better use of community facilities
- Implementing an effective early warning and referral process.

The aim of this strategy is to continue to strengthen the services provided to our tenants, to seek our new opportunities to meet the challenges described above and to ensure the service maintains financial viability.

7. Scope of this Strategy

This strategy sets out the key priorities for the service over the next 3 years. They are:

- Review the service offer for independent living with support.
- Ensure effective support for older people living in general needs housing
- Make the best use of our assets, ensuring future sustainability of independent living schemes
- Become a dementia friend
- Explore opportunities for care provision
- Develop partnerships with key agencies and look for future funding opportunities.
- Make the best use of our high quality employee team

Each of these is now set out in the following section in more detail.

8. Priorities for the service

There are 7 areas to develop as part of the Ageing Well Strategy. A full action plan is being developed against each area.

Objective 1: Review the service offer for Independent Living

This follows the findings of the independent review. The review highlighted the positive impact of the service and the important role it provides in supporting tenants. It also indicated areas for improvement to ensure service provision and VFM. Work streams are:

- Re-define the warden role to scheme manager

- Modernise the branding, information and signage– moving from sheltered housing to independent living.
- Improve activities within the schemes.
- Review the structure of the existing service.
- Ensure the charging structure is fair and all relevant costs charged appropriately.
- Make better use of communal spaces and improve links with the local community.
- Ensure scheme managers are involved in allocations and promoting the schemes effectively to the local community.

Objective 2: Ensure Effective Support to Older People in General Needs Housing

A significant number of RBH's tenants in general needs housing are aged over 65. Most will not need additional support, but this should be provided if required. Work streams are to:

- Make better use of assistive technology
- Promote and develop the community warden service offer
- Ensure that, where suitable, adaptations are made to homes, including minor adaptations, that make best use of the RBH adaptations budget and OT service
- Recognise the needs of potentially vulnerable customers and ensure support is provided where necessary, working with other RBH Teams
- Have effective safeguarding policies and procedures in place.
- Work with Circle to combat social isolation and support full and active lives for older people.

Objective 3: Continue to invest in our assets, making best use of them and ensuring future sustainability of the independent living schemes

As part of the transfer to a mutual, RBH are investing in significantly improving our independent living schemes. RBH must maintain financial viability and invest this money appropriately. We will continue to review the sustainability of schemes to ensure the investment makes good business and financial sense. The priorities here are to:

- Continue to maintain a sustainability index for each independent living scheme
- Update the NPV assessments for each scheme yearly.
- Review investment in schemes taking into account demand and sustainability
- Put in place an action plan for any scheme with below average sustainability indicators and a below average NPV.

Objective 4: Become a Dementia Friend

There has been a significant increase in the number of tenants living both in general needs housing and independent living schemes who are suffering from dementia and

these numbers will sadly continue to grow. RBH must be ready to support tenants either in their own homes, or where necessary supporting a move into more suitable accommodation. Priorities include:

- Register as a Dementia Friend.
- Improve design of existing schemes to become more dementia friendly.
- Train employees on the best ways of supporting people with dementia.
- Improve the identification of early signs of dementia and develop a referral process with Adult Social Care.
- Further development of activities in independent living schemes to promote health and wellbeing, preventing loneliness to help delay the onset of dementia.
- Identify and support tenants with dementia living in general needs housing.

Objective 5: Reviewing opportunities for care provision

There is a national crisis in care provision with in many cases poor quality provision, low wages, zero hours contracts and inconsistency. As identified in the independent review, there are increasing care needs within the RBH tenant base. These need to be met to support tenants to continue to live in their homes. Whether RBH is best placed to potentially deliver care, or support care provision in our homes by other providers needs further consideration and financial analysis.

- Investigate potential for RBH to provide care and obtain Care Quality Commission registration
- Review potential for additional extra care provision – including scheme conversions, new schemes or small developments within existing independent living schemes
- Work with RMBC and other providers to consider care provision in RBH homes

Objective 6 Develop partnerships with key agencies and look for future funding opportunities.

Funding opportunities for supported housing provision and services for older people are available, in particular through the health agenda. We will demonstrate the value that we provide to health and council partners and work to understand their priorities.

- Improve performance management information demonstrating social value and the impact of our services on the lives of our tenants.
- Building on the research of Baxendale to identify key partners and business opportunities.
- Monitor funding opportunities and apply for funding wherever possible in a competitive, professional manner.
- Extend influence through trying to obtain membership of or links with Rochdale's strategic governance bodies for health and social care, such as the Health and Wellbeing Board.
- To work with partners on service development and work to shared objectives.

- Work with partners to target services to support older people in RBH communities, e.g. Circle.
- Explore the opportunities presented by the devolved health budget to Greater Manchester.

Objective 7: Making the best use of our high quality employee team

As demonstrated through our tenants' surveys and feedback, the strength and popularity of our current service is due to the quality and dedication of our employee team. We know that the role of the scheme manager is crucial in the smooth running of our independent living schemes, however we must also ensure that the service operates within budget and is not subsidised by other parts of RBH. We will continue to work with our employee team to ensure:

- That the team remain a well trained, motivated group, putting the customers first.
- To make best use of the skills and experience of our team members.
- Look for funding opportunities to continue to develop the service, such as the successful application for funding through the Clinical Commissioning Group for our activities co-ordinator.
- Make use of employee Our Team and volunteer time to support older people.

9. Stakeholder Analysis

The development of this strategy has been undertaken in conjunction with the RBH Representative Body, Board and the RBH Services for All Panel and in consultation with partners.

Baxendale have undertaken a significant piece of research considering partnership options for RBH considering commercial viability and the best fit with RBH's service provision and expertise. The research outlined opportunities for service development around care provision, falls provision and assistive technology provider or potentially being a back office provider to a local care company. It also recommended the importance of extending influence through the local health governance routes.

Partnerships are being developed to help support the service, look for new options on service provision and to help meet the needs of our tenants with agencies, including:

- RMBC – Adult Social Care and Strategic Housing
- NHS Pennine Care and the CCG
- Supported Housing providers
- Care Providers
- Other Registered Providers
- Community Groups
- Sheltered Housing In Partnership
- Circle

10. Equality and Diversity

An equality impact assessment has been completed for this strategy and key aspects of service provision. It highlighted the importance of promoting services to all groups and the opportunities to enhance service provision to older people from the BME communities.

11. Monitoring and Review

All RBH strategies, policies and procedures are reviewed on a regular basis in order to ensure that they are 'fit for purpose' and comply with all relevant legislation and statutory regulations.

An action plan is being developed to accompany this Strategy. This strategy will be reviewed annually in order to ensure its continued appropriateness and formally reviewed and submitted to the appropriate 'approving body' every three years. Progress against the action plan will be reviewed on a regular basis by the Representative Body.

12. Links with other RBH Strategies and Policies

- RBH Our Mutual Future Corporate Strategy 2015-18
- RBH Asset Management Strategy
- New Development Strategy
- Disposals Policy
- Environmental programme
- Major investment programme
- Neighbourhood profiling
- Financial viability index
- Welfare reform – Supporting Our Places
- Our Place neighbourhood action plans.