



Housing for vulnerable people

Strategy statement

AFFORDABLE HOMES STRONG COMMUNITIES



Strategy statement

- The Housing Corporation supports the provision of affordable homes within strong and sustainable communities.
- We believe that a strong and sustainable community benefits from the inclusion, and responds to the needs, of all its members, including those who are vulnerable.
- Our aim is to use our investment and regulatory powers to secure the provision of homes within communities that respond to vulnerable people's particular requirements for support, care and self-determination, thereby maximising their quality of life.
- Housing associations are key players in the creation of sustainable communities, providing homes and support and care services for vulnerable people, within a strategic framework set by Regional Housing Boards, local authorities and the health service.

This strategy sets out how we will engage with housing associations and support them in responding to the needs of vulnerable people, working with local and health authorities, the Department of Health, the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister and others.

The Strategy

The Housing Corporation will:

- invest a significant proportion of our capital funding programme on schemes that will directly benefit vulnerable people;
- achieve close co-ordination between our funding and regulatory systems and those of other parts of Government;
- identify and promote best practice models for the provision of housing, care and support for vulnerable people; and
- ensure throughout this work that vulnerable people are offered choice and a maximum degree of independence in the way they live their lives.

Vulnerable People

The Housing Corporation takes a broad view of vulnerability and recognises that vulnerability is not necessarily permanent. We include those people requiring additional care and support services both in general needs and specialist housing and regardless of age. We recognise that not all older people are vulnerable and this Strategy for Vulnerable People links with our Policy and Strategy for Older People.

Delivering the Strategy

Strategy	Action
<p>1.0 We will align our investment and regulatory activity with the Government's policy objectives for vulnerable people.</p> <p>In particular we will:</p>	
<p>1.1 Invest in schemes that provide quality and control to vulnerable people as they seek to live independently, maintain their tenancies and enjoy a good quality of life.</p>	<p>During the course of 2005/06 we will initiate a project to identify best practice models of housing with support and/or care for different client groups and tenures.</p> <p>We will work with specialist agencies and use our Innovation and Good Practice resources to commission the development of innovative practice where needed.¹</p>
<p>1.2 Respond to and support the local authority's role to identify demand and offer choice to vulnerable people.</p>	<p>For the 2006/08 Approved Development Programme (ADP), we will only invest in schemes which meet needs identified in relevant strategies, including local authority and regional Supporting People strategies and health strategies.</p> <p>We will work with local authorities and Regional Housing and Planning Boards to better understand where the gaps in provision are.</p>
<p>1.3 Encourage the provision of support services to people living in general needs housing.</p>	<p>As part of our bidding guidance for the 2006/08 ADP we will ask providers to ensure where appropriate that the needs of vulnerable people are met in general needs housing.</p>
<p>1.4 Support measures that empower people to exercise choice including, where relevant, the purchase of their own support and care services.</p>	<p>We will work with Government to further the objectives of the social care Green Paper 'Independence, Well-being and Choice' and also of Improving the Life Chances of Disabled People.</p>

¹ This Action will be implemented within the IGP Prospectus, which we will publish later in 2005.

Strategy	Action
<p>2.0 We will ensure a close fit between our capital funding programmes, the ODPM's Supporting People programme, and other funding programmes.</p> <p>In particular we will:</p>	
<p>2.1 Ensure that our investment programme can be readily accessed by schemes that meet agreed funding criteria.</p>	<p>In 2004/06, our funding of Supported Housing schemes amounted to 5% of our ADP.² Subject to receiving suitable bids, we are keen to see this proportion increase in future programmes.</p> <p>In June 2005 we will publish outline funding criteria for the 2006/08 ADP in our Pre-prospectus.</p> <p>We will find ways to support the remodelling and reprovision of existing schemes, where it can be shown that this represents value for money in the use of Social Housing Grant.</p> <p>We will publish a Recycled Capital Grant Funds and Disposal Proceeds Funds Review Consultation Paper in June 2005. This will address the recycling of grant in accommodation for vulnerable people.</p>
<p>2.2 Introduce capital grant funding for the provision of housing for vulnerable people by non-RSLs.</p>	<p>We will publish outline details in our 2006/08 ADP Pre-prospectus and full details in Bidding Guidance in the Autumn of 2005.</p>
<p>2.3 Explore ways to better align the revenue and capital funding streams for housing for vulnerable people.</p>	<p>We will work with the Supporting People team at the ODPM to produce a joint statement of the links between revenue and capital funding regimes.</p>
<p>2.4 Seek to simplify arrangements for providing adaptations that can help a tenant remain in their own home.</p>	<p>We will work with Government as it prepares and publishes its review of the Disabled Facilities Grant system. We will encourage best practice and co-operation between housing associations, local authorities and other agencies.</p>

² Excluding the Key Worker Living programme

Strategy	Action
3.0 We will help housing associations and other providers identify and effectively manage the risks they may face in relation to the provision of housing for vulnerable people.	
In particular we will:	
3.1 Target our regulatory effort at those most at risk.	Our Lead Regulation teams are continuously assessing funding and performance data to identify those associations most at risk.
3.2 Signpost best practice responses to the management of risk within the provision of housing with support and care services	We will publish our Risk Management Toolkit for housing associations involved in housing with care and support in July 2005.
3.3 Identify and reduce areas of duplication in the regulatory framework that providers work with.	We will initiate a project to identify areas of dual regulation in September 2005 and make recommendations to our Board in March 2006 aimed at removing unnecessary regulatory burden in the sector.
4.0 We will continue to contribute to the development of housing policy and programmes for vulnerable people.	
In particular we will:	
4.1 Commission and disseminate knowledge and expertise about the best practice in housing for vulnerable people.	We will identify existing best practice and work with partners to commission the development of innovative practice (see also 1.1). We will pay particular attention to the needs of vulnerable people from BME communities.
4.2 Use our market intelligence to inform policy makers of ways to improve outcomes for vulnerable people, and help model the likely impact of changes to policies and programmes.	We will continue to provide advice to Government and others about the development and implementation of programmes that involve housing, care and support and vulnerable people.
5.0 We will work with a wide variety of organisations and experts.	
In particular we will:	
5.1 Maintain our understanding of the operational context for housing associations and other providers of support and Supporting People authorities.	Our Field Regulation and Investment teams will keep in close contact with providers and we will ensure that the knowledge they acquire informs our policy making and advice to Government.
5.2 Be informed by a wide network of contacts within Whitehall and at regional level, with providers, and with clients and service users.	Our Board will establish an Advisory Group on Housing for Vulnerable People, which will first meet by September 2005.

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