

'My Own Front Door'

A Plan for housing in later life

Rhondda Cynon Taf



Consultation Version

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Mae'r ddogfen hon ar gael yn Gymraeg / This document is also available in Welsh

Contents

Section One

Setting the Scene

Introduction and Purpose

Legislative Context

Who are people in later life?

Vision and Themes

Process

Section One - Key Points

Section Two

What do we know?

Consultation

What we were told

Section Two - Key Points

Section Three

Where are we now?

The Statistics

Our services

Housing provision

What else are we doing?

Section Three - Key Points

Section Four

Where we want to be

Identified themes

The issues

What do we want to achieve

How will we achieve it?

Section Four - Key Points

Appendix 1 - Glossary

Section 1 - Setting the Scene

Introduction and Purpose

This plan has been developed in recognition of Rhondda Cynon Taf's ageing population and the need to increase the range of housing options available to people in later life. Our aim is to enable older people to live independently in their home of choice for as long as possible in accommodation that is good quality and good value for money.

By 2021, 20% of Rhondda Cynon Taf's population is projected to be over 65. Although people in later life are a large and diverse group with needs and aspirations that will differ considerably, evidence suggests that there is a common ground that all older people can identify with, which is the desire to stay within one's own home for as long as possible (Housing Survey 2012) .

It's recognised that not all people plan for their future; however, planning ahead can mean a happier and healthier later adulthood, without the need to move. Adaptable and flexible housing can mean the difference between continuing to live at home and the need to move into residential accommodation, however few developments incorporate lifetime and age sustainable design features at present. Such barriers create an increased need for housing and health and social care services to work effectively together, to ensure quality of life, independence and improved health for the older sector, whatever their choice of home. The provision of accommodation with support is currently centred on sheltered housing and residential care and therefore this plan explores how the existing options available in Rhondda Cynon Taf can be expanded.

The strategy for Older People in Wales (2013-2023): Living Longer, Ageing Well, drives the vision that "People in Wales feel valued and supported, whatever their age" and that "all older people in Wales have the social, environmental and financial resources they need to deal with the opportunities and challenges they face". This is echoed throughout the Council's Local Housing Delivery Plan 2013-2016, which references the links between housing and health and the ability to maintain and develop good social relationships adding to sense of purpose and good quality of life.

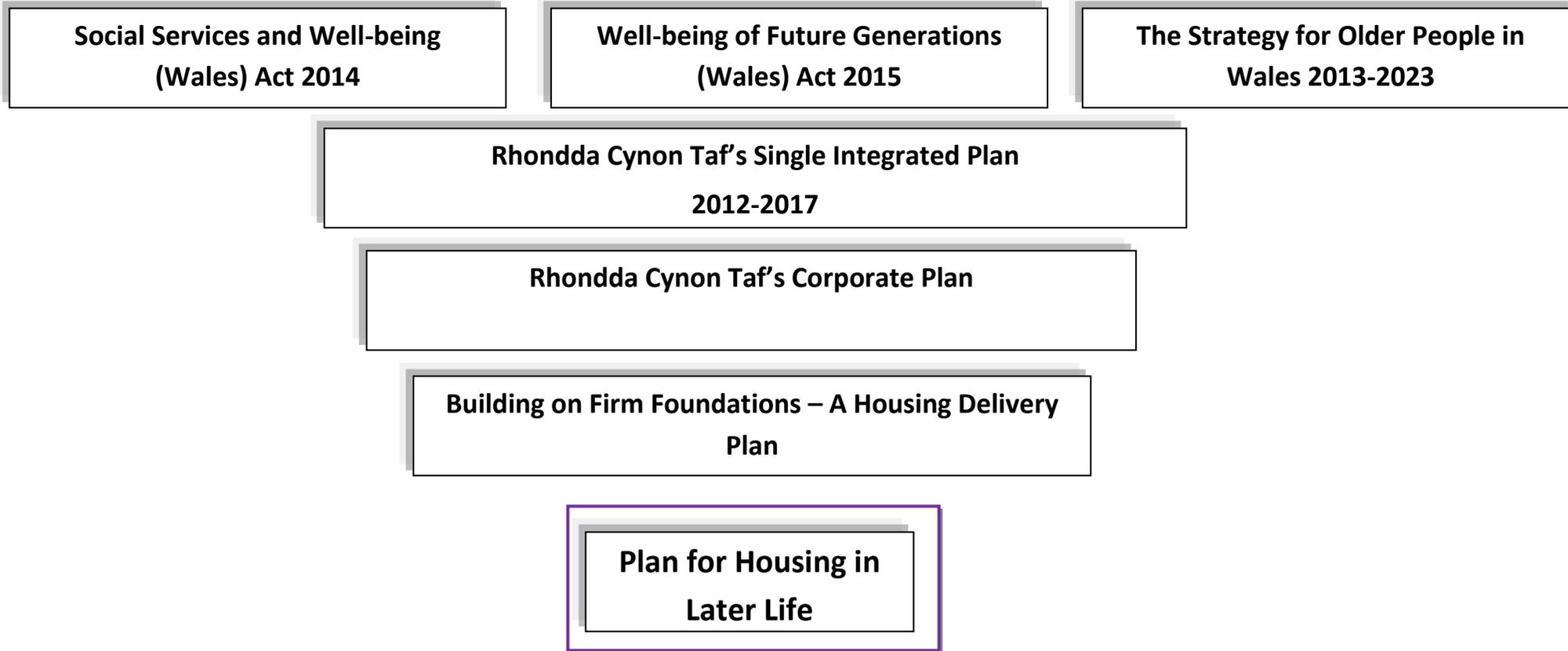
In line with the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act, 2014 and Cwm Taf's 'Joint Commissioning Statement for Older People's Services 2015 -2025, the plan will focus on preventative intervention; for example, timely adaptation of existing homes, providing informed choice with a transparent range of affordable and comfortable accommodation types and prolonged independence for people in later life.

The focus of this Plan will be largely on the over 65 age bracket, however it will be highlighted where references are made to over 50s, in accordance with the Strategy for Older People in Wales (Welsh Government) and in recognition of the preventative measures depicted by the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014, Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and Rhondda Cynon Taf's Single Integrated Plan. We recognise that many people within this bracket will not see themselves as old. We also recognise that the over 50 age bracket is not homogenous; therefore strategic themes are person centred and recognise the need for a tailored, individualised approach to planning for accommodation in later life.

Existing and future housing provision needs to be fit for purpose yet flexible enough to meet current and future housing aspirations efficiently. The need for co-ordination and integration of health, housing and support services is recognised as a key priority. Where possible and where preferred, we will work with people in later life to enable them to retain independence in the home of their choice, with the collaboration of preventative support services, assistive technology and property adaptations. However, where higher level support is required, services will remain transparent, offering affordable, suitable and good quality provision, maximising health, strengths and well-being.

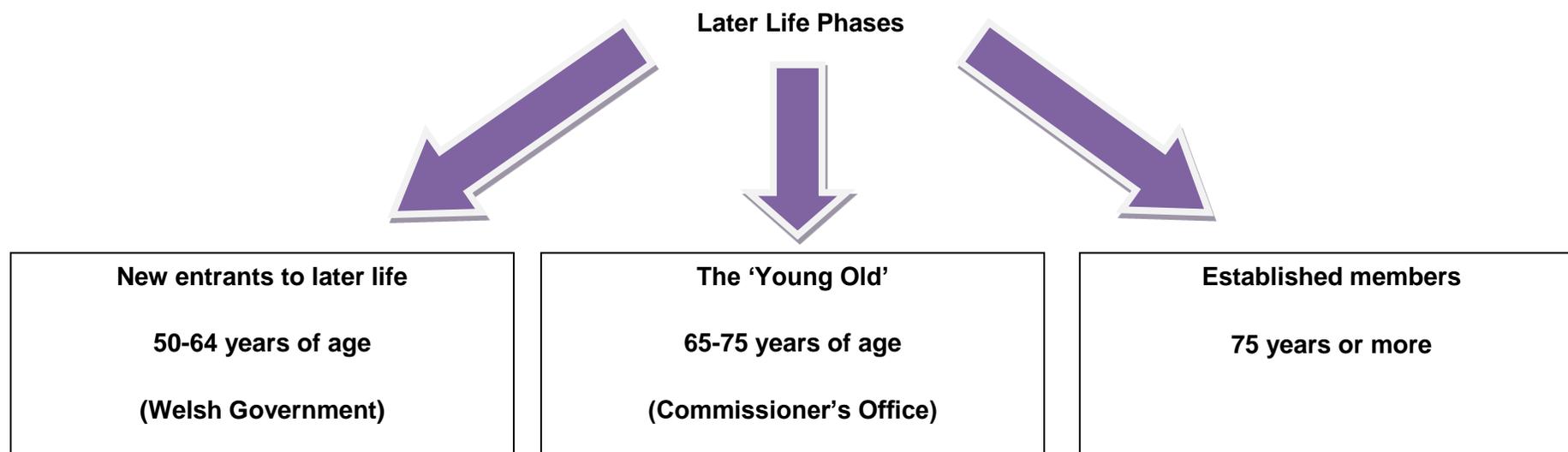
Legislative Context

This Plan has been developed in accordance with the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 and the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. It forms part of a suite of housing strategies that are aligned under the Single Integrated Plan and is a sub strategy of the Council's Housing Delivery Plan 2013-2018.



Who are People in later life?

This plan identifies three age groups within the stages of later life. However, it is important not to view all people within these groups as homogenous. Not all older people will see themselves as 'old' and people within these age brackets will develop different needs at different points in 'later life'. The Later Phases identified in the plan are also reflective of the different funding streams available e.g. Handyperson for energy measures service is available for those over 50, whereas maintenance renovation grants (MRA) are for those over 60 years of age.



Our Vision

'People in later life can live independently in their home of choice for as long as possible'

Strategic aims

Strategic aim 1: Make available person centred and preventative support to minimise the escalation of critical need

- To support the decision to remain in the home of choice and retain independence and quality of life
- To renew focus on good quality provision with emphasis on an integrated approach to early intervention and preventative support services to avoid dependence on higher level support

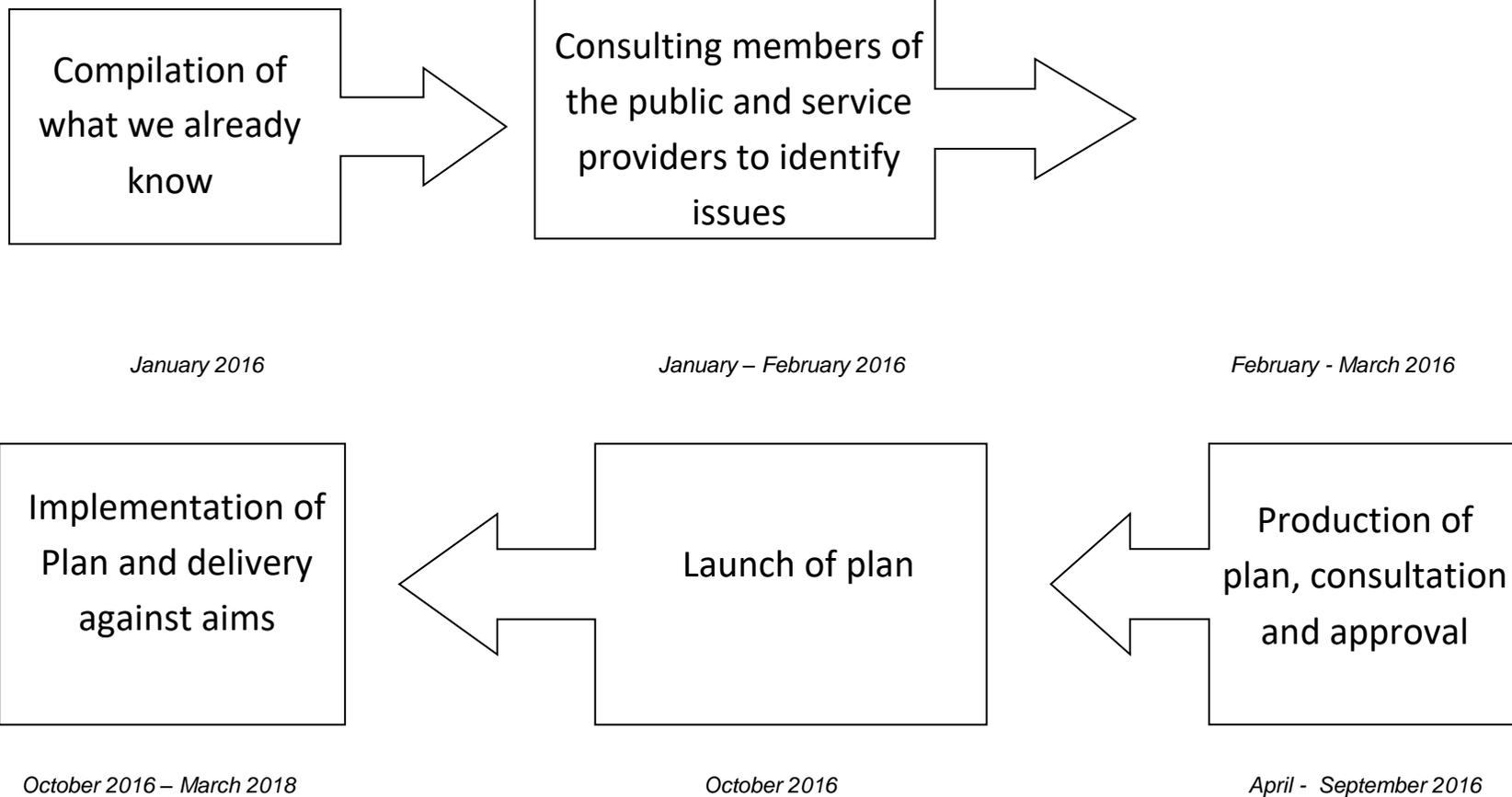
Strategic aim 2: Easily Accessible Information, Advice and Assistance

- To develop a person centred, individualised approach to housing service delivery and housing options for older people
- Ensure information, advice, assistance and advocacy are easily accessible, enabling informed decisions that promote optimum levels of independence, well-being and control

Strategic aim 3: To enable a range of good quality housing choices that promotes independence, prolonged health and well-being

- To develop a range of sustainable quality accommodation options in a variety of tenures, along with flexible support services that efficiently meet the needs of and provide choice for people in later life now and in the future
- To review and reconfigure existing accommodation to promote well-being, maximise health, prolong independence and support the changing needs of people in later life
- To develop accommodation services that contribute to cohesive communities and combat loneliness and isolation

The process we're following to bring you this plan:



Section One - Key points

- By 2021, 20% of the population in Rhondda Cynon Taf is projected to be over 65
- The over 50 age group is not homogenous, however most people would prefer to stay in their own home for as long as possible
- People in later life hope to retain maximum independence and control
- Lifetime homes are key in matching aspirations
- Strategic housing function supports preventive measures of Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014 and Cwm Taf's Joint Commissioning Statement for Older People's Services 2015-2025
- We acknowledge that 'later life' starts at different ages for different people
- Rhondda Cynon Taf CBC is committed to providing preventative support, a choice of provision, accessible information and a tailored, person centred approach to housing
- This plan identifies where we are now, where we'd like to be, how we're going to get there and has been developed in accordance with what you've told us



Section 2 - What do we know?

Consultation

In order to develop and shape this plan we've consulted with a range of groups, using a variety of methods:

Focus Groups
As part of the local housing plan development, a series of focus groups with over 50s were conducted. The first group consisted of residents living in their own home or renting privately or from a social landlord. The second group represented those living within sheltered accommodation in Rhondda, Cynon and Taf.
A group of private developers were asked about their views around lifetime homes.

Survey
The survey was promoted via the Cwm Taf Hub and the Older Persons Plan Development Coordinator. Participants were asked to answer nine questions regarding their accommodation preferences.
The survey was also completed by the attendees of the Older People's Advisory Group and verbally by attendees of the Ystrad Rhondda Over 50's Health and Well-being Event.

Steering Group

Around 12 officers across a number of departments have met monthly to oversee and inform the plan development process.

Visioning Session

A group of Directors, Service Managers, Care managers and officers met to discuss the emerging issues and trends around the existing accommodation model. The focus of the session was to pull together the issues identified and achieve a range of strategic themes that would directly address these themes.

What we were told

We've pulled together the issues identified through our engagement processes. These issues have been categorised by theme and are detailed in the table below:

Person Centred Support and Prevention	Easily Accessible Information, Advice and Assistance	Good Quality Housing Choice that promotes independence and well-being
Feeling valued and supported is of significant importance in choosing where to live, along with feeling safe and remaining close to family and friends.	Residents listed a range of methods they would use to obtain information around accommodation; these included the RCT website, Citizen's Advice Bureau, One4All Centre, Social Services, RCT call centre, the Older Persons Strategy Coordinator and Care & Repair.	The biggest factor of importance was the ability to remain living in one's own home , with no desire or intention to move.

People in later life would make changes to their home and access domiciliary care to prevent the need to move.	A general sense of anxiety emerged regarding readily available support for adaptations, with distress that many services were means tested .	Residents questioned would choose to live close to local amenities.
A tailored approach is needed to be able to suit individual needs.	A common mistrust emerged around private builders and handy person schemes, with residents stating they would prefer to use a Council run scheme even if this meant paying.	Downsizing was considered the preferable option over the others presented to those in later life.
Poor quality housing links with detrimental health .	Sheltered accommodation was likened to a care home with perceptions developed from rumour and speculation and not factual information.	A wide selection of accommodation options are needed to cater for the needs of people in later life.
A strong sense of pride was emulated with living independently post retirement	An understanding of the distinction between sheltered schemes, care homes and nursing homes differentiated throughout the borough	Residents reported difficulties associated with gradients and steps , both within local streets and their front drives and gardens
Fuel poverty was a common theme, with the difficulties in heating the home highlighted	No single point of access for information, assistance and advice was referenced.	Notable geographical differences emerged with residents in Taf considering 'sharing', but Rhondda residents feeling 'sharing; would be too difficult to acclimatise too.
Many residents reported progressive adaptation of their property or purchasing a property with their future in mind, ensuring they could continue	Not all people in later life are claiming the assistance they could be entitled to, sometimes as it's not proactively communicated to them	Limited tenure of flats, bungalows and adapted properties was evident

to live independently, either on one level or with easy access to other levels via stair lifts and open spaces		
Existing tenants of a sheltered complex felt that an undue delay in their decision to move was detrimental to their ability to adapt	Most calls to First Response came from individuals wishing to speak to a named social worker who they were directly involved with	The “ walk up ” flat design was praised
Many people in later life felt that ‘older age’ hadn’t started for them yet		A gap in the market for a ‘private later life living product’ was identified
Means testing was a deterrent in people exploring preventative options		Poor quality housing can lead to deteriorating health

Quotes from engagement with members of the public:

"I value my independence and prefer to remain in my own home for as long as is practical and possible for me to do so"

"I would consider options such as extra care, sheltered accommodation or a retirement village in the future"

"I hope God gives me the strength to stay in my own home until I'm in a box"

"They say if you have money you can't access grants, but we can't spend all our savings and be left with nothing"

"There should be bungalows included in these plans for new developments"

"There are a lack of private flats you can own yourself"

"It's lovely to have your own front door"

Sheltered complexes "have a smell about them"



Section Two - Key Points

The community engagement methods highlighted the following:

- Gaps in current provision, with sheltered accommodation being the main option
- Myths and misconceptions around sheltered accommodation, residential and nursing care

Section 3 - Where are we now?

The statistics

Midyear population estimates identified that **18%** of Rhondda Cynon Taf's population were aged 65 or over.

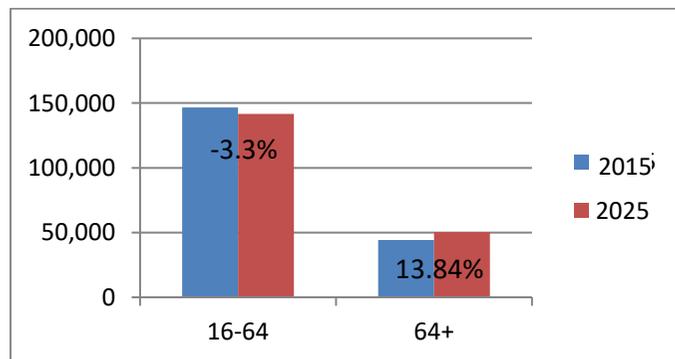
Table 1

Total number of residents over 65	Male	Female
44,367	20,191	24,176

ONS Population estimate 2015

Figure 1

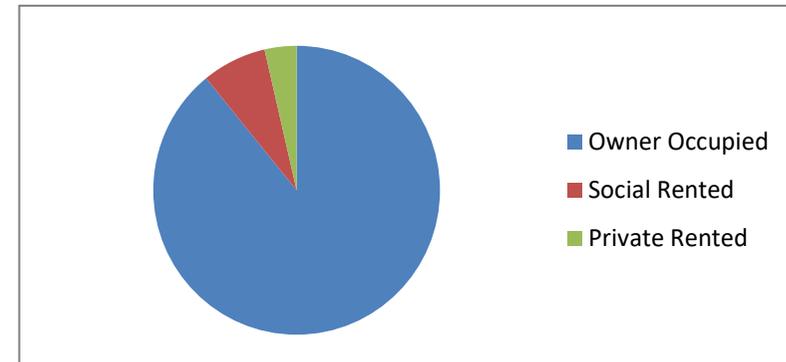
Projected Percentage Increase of population – 2015 -2025



Population growth is evident in the older age bracket.

Figure 2

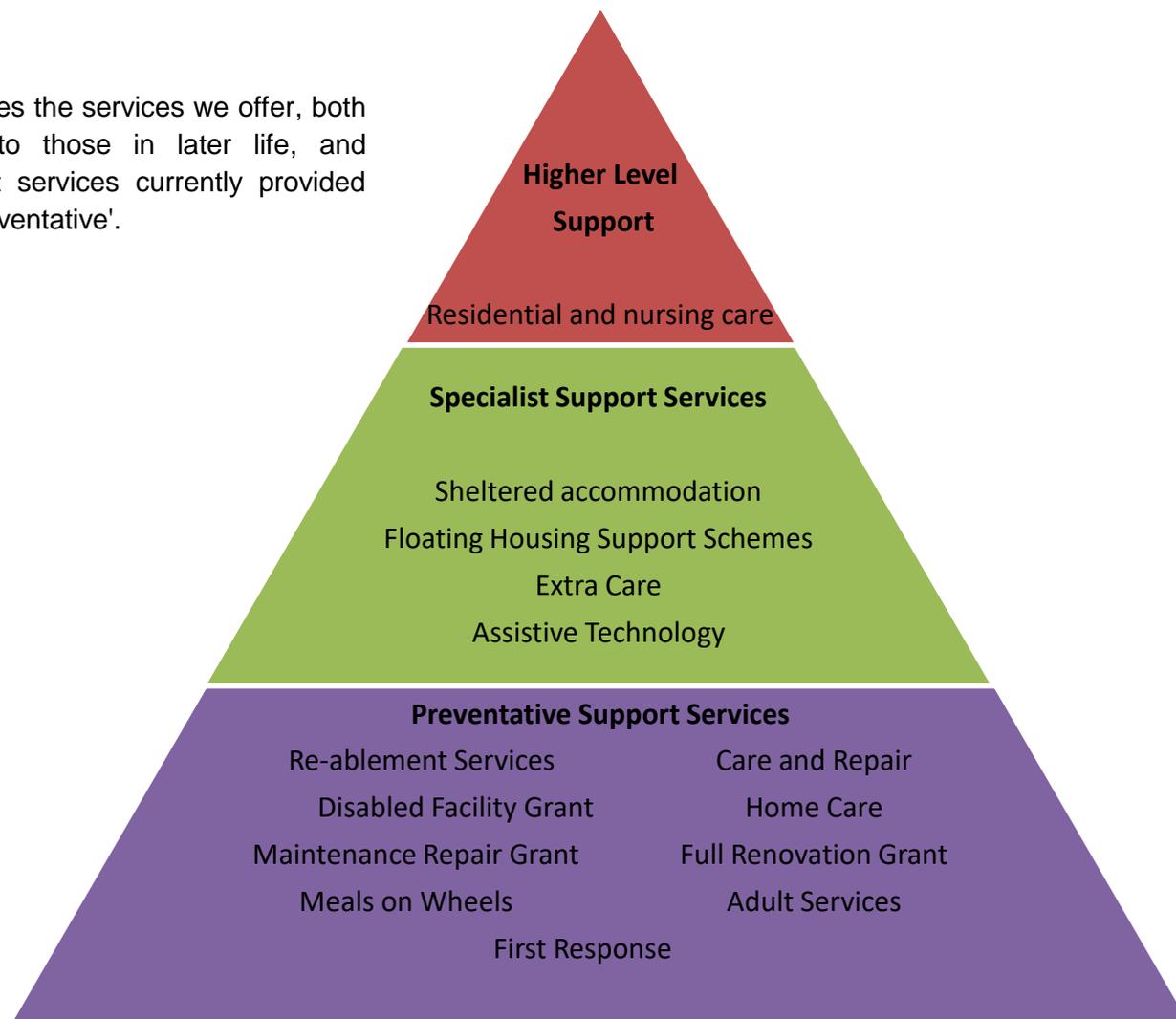
Over 65 year olds by tenure in Rhondda Cynon Taf

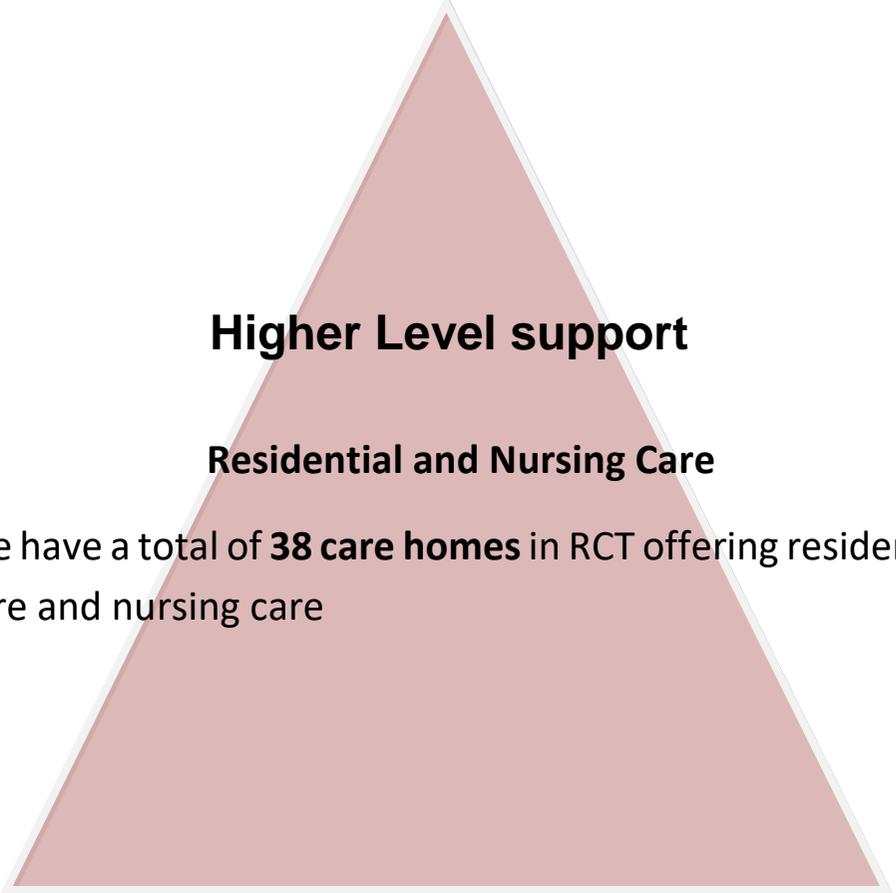


The 2012 Housing Survey identified a common preference for one to stay in one's own. Only 1% of responses portrayed a desire to move to a complex with people of similar ages.

Our Current Services

This triangle demonstrates the services we offer, both housing and support to those in later life, and demonstrates that most services currently provided can be described as 'preventative'.





Higher Level support

Residential and Nursing Care

We have a total of **38 care homes** in RCT offering residential care and nursing care

Specialist Support Services

Sheltered Accommodation

Sheltered accommodation offers the opportunity to remain living independently, in a smaller home, within a community with residents of a similar age. There are currently **1272** older persons and/or **sheltered** units in Rhondda Cynon Taf. Housing associations regularly review and reconfigure their stock, decommissioning where needed. RCT Homes are currently rebuilding two new sheltered schemes, which will both provide 28 units. Rhondda Cynon Taf Council is working with the housing associations to address the mismatch between need and supply, identified in the Local Housing Market Assessment and stock review.

Floating Support

The RCT Homes, Safe Project is a low level **floating support** scheme for anyone over the age of 55 who requires support in their own home. This scheme is funded through the Council's supporting People Programme. The support is available to people in sheltered accommodation, private rented tenancies, housing association tenants and owner occupiers. The scheme provides support to assist people who have housing support needs or require support to maintain their current circumstances, e.g. support with living skills/ maintaining safety/accessing community facilities.

Extra Care

Rhondda Cynon Taf CBC is currently working with Hafod Housing Association to build a brand new **Extra Care** facility in Talbot Green. This will provide 42 individual flats for those over the age of 55. Extra Care widens the choice available to those over 55 and bridges the gap between struggling in one's own home and entering residential care prematurely. Extra Care living promotes health, well-being and independence and acts as a preventative measure in avoiding the need for high level support. Extra care living also encompasses the five elements of the Future Generations Well-Being (Wales) Act sustainable tool and addresses many of the 7 goals.

Preventative Support Services

Assistive Technology

The Council supplies a wide range of assistive technology equipment to support people in their own homes. The cost of the package is dependent upon an individual financial assessment.

Re-ablement

Re-ablement services offer a short focussed intervention to support people to maintain or regain independent living skills following an illness or hospital admission. The intervention ordinarily lasts six weeks will negate or reduce the need for an ongoing service.

Grants

There are a range of **grants** available to those over the age of 60 and over the age of 50 if the grant relates to energy measures. Grants range from Handyperson schemes to full renovations.

Care and Repair

The **Care and Repair** service enables people in later life and/or with a disability to remain in their own home with increased comfort and security. Care and Repair offer a range of services, from a handyperson scheme offering minor repairs to a rapid response adaptations programme to prevent accidents or aid hospital discharge.

Home Care

Home care services support with daily living and can be long term or for a short period, for example after a hospital stay. The cost to the client is dependent on the outcome of a financial assessment. The service is offered to those who may otherwise need to leave their own home and move into residential care.

Meals on Wheels

The **meals on wheels** service can provide one hot meal a day Monday to Friday, with chilled meals provided on a Friday for the weekend. The meal service is available to people over the age of 60 who live in Rhondda Cynon Taf. However, meals can be delivered to people under the age of 60 who have been assessed as needing this service because of disability or illness.

Adult Social Services

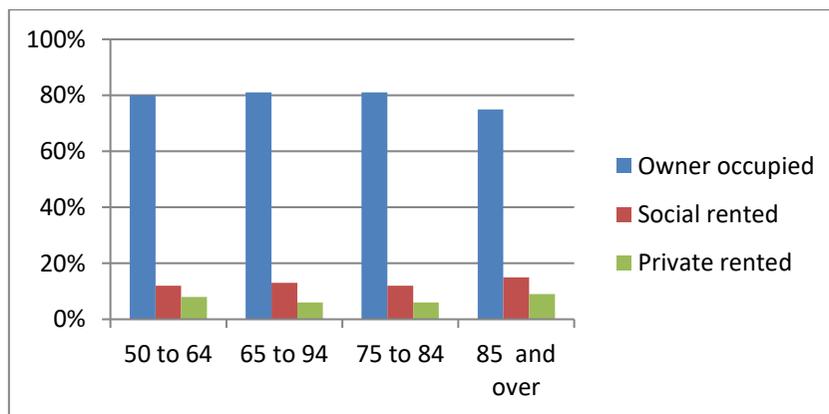
Adult Social Care Services in Rhondda Cynon Taf work with adults who need care, support or protection in order to live safely and independently in their own homes, within their local communities while enjoying a fulfilled life. Packages of support are based on an individual assessment. 20

Our Current Housing Provision

This section looks at the current accommodation choices in Rhondda Cynon Taf available to those in later life who may not be able to stay within their own home. Whilst we know living independently is the preferred choice of most, there may come a time when this isn't possible. This section also details some examples of proactive and preventative practices and services that are however, working to increase independence for longer.

Current estimates show that almost 80% of over 50's own their own home (*figure 3*). This decreases as people enter the 'established members' bracket, with the prevalence of entering residential care increasing. Table 2 explores the other options available to residents in Rhondda Cynon Taf.

Figure 3



Accommodation with support

Accommodation with support in Rhondda Cynon Taf currently consists mainly of sheltered accommodation. Whilst sheltered accommodation provides the opportunity to live independently for longer, a reluctance to move to sheltered accommodation by many older people means that there is currently a mismatch between supply and demand, with more sheltered housing than required currently available in the County Borough. Established members of the later life stage often do need to move from their own home, but rather than entering sheltered housing as a proactive choice in the earlier stages of 'later life', the local evidence suggests that people stay in their own home until at which point it becomes no longer safe or possible for them to do so and then directly enter residential or nursing care.

Table 2

Supported Living Accommodation by type:	
Accommodation Description	Current number of units
Sheltered accommodation	1272
Extra care	42
Retirement villages	0

Sheltered accommodation

Sheltered accommodation places are self-funded, however rent may be subsidised or covered if the tenant claims housing benefit. If a resident requires a care package, the local authority may make a contribution to this. The contribution will be determined by the individual's financial assessment. Sheltered complexes in RCT are provided by the local housing associations. There are currently 49 complexes across the borough. RCT homes have recently decommissioned two of their schemes with the intention of rebuilding reconfigured schemes to a higher standard and an aim of maximising uptake.

Extra Care

Extra care is new to Rhondda Cynon Taf with the first facility opening in summer 2016. Extra Care is an effective housing resource that can support independent living for people in later life with a ranging level of care needs within an apartment as opposed to residential home bedroom. It's proposed that someone with a high level care package may be able to reduce their care needs by living in extra care housing as opposed to their previous home, as improved health and increased confidence have been reported as a direct result of extra care living (Housing Learning and Improvement Network, 2014). Extra Care allows non-institutional living, whereby residents can live independently, with a full and active social life, whilst facilitating on-site care and support where needed. The provision is thought to suit a range of people, with a national projection that there could be a potential demand for 10,500 extra care units by 2030.

The development of extra care provision is consistent with an enabling, strengths based approach to accommodation services, promoting independence, health and well-being and social opportunities that combat isolation and loneliness in a non-institutional or residential based setting.

Extra care lends itself to even more effective partnership working between the Council, developers, housing associations and support providers in both the planning and development stages and throughout scheme delivery. Until the new Talbot Green facility opens, RCT stands as the only council in Wales without specialist extra care housing. The Talbot Green Extra Care facility, developed by Hafod Housing Association in partnership with RCT local authority will offer individualised levels of support for residents. Residents will have tailored care and support plans in place, which can be delivered within the comfort of their home, made easier by support staff being based on site. Residents will have a fixed rate of monthly rent, which will include service and meal charges. This will be subsidised by housing benefit where applicable. Contributions to care packages will be subject to individual financial assessments. The 42 apartments have been specially designed to enable people over 55 to continue living independent lives, with easy access to support where needed.

The projected costs of extra care are detailed in **Table 3** and based on actual costs in neighbouring authorities. Actual costs in RCT will depend on the individual social care needs of tenants, for example a tenant could live independently with no support package, whilst another tenant receives a care and support package higher than the average. The total number of care hours per week could vary considerably. The extra care facility in Talbot Green has 16 one bedroom and 24 two bedroom apartments.

Table 3

Extra Care Projected Costs	Average costs have been projected based on the cost of schemes in neighbouring authorities. Costs are indicative of a range of care and support packages i.e. high, medium and low and exclude rent. Client contributions would be dependent on individual financial assessments.
Projected average annual cost	£227,000
Projected average cost per client per week	£104.00

Domiciliary care

Domiciliary care services enable people to live at home for longer, assisting people with the activities that they are no longer able to carry out for themselves. Support can include help with personal care needs such as bathing and getting dressed, help at mealtimes or activities within the home. Packages can be tailored according to the individual and can enable people in later life to live independently for longer in their own home or within sheltered accommodation. Packages of care are based on the individual's needs assessment, carried out by a member of the adult services team. Domiciliary care is currently provided by both in-house and external providers. The Council has recently announced plans to

reconfigure domiciliary care services, by retendering the contract across RCT and placing emphasis on an outcome based approach to the service. Domiciliary care staff will be based on site at the new extra care facility.

The GROSS cost of domiciliary care in Rhondda Cynon Taf was £16,588,058 for 14/15. This figure includes home care and re-ablement and represents the whole package of care. In quarter 3 15/16 the average GROSS cost per client, per week equated to £169.88 for externally provided care and support. This was based on the average package of 12 hours, 20 minutes per week. In-house support domiciliary care provision had a separate unit cost of £254.11 per week for an average package size of 11.26 hours.

An analysis of domiciliary care and re-ablement services in RCT indicated that short term intervention services in RCT have been successful in increasing the number of service users who become independent of statutory services, with 72% of people becoming independent in 2013/14 compared to 67% in 2011/12.

Residential and Nursing Care

Within Rhondda Cynon Taf there are 37 care homes. 25 of these homes are privately owned and provide either residential and/or nursing care. 12 of the homes are owned by the local authority and provide residential care. **Table 4** demonstrates the total number of units/beds available within these settings. In-house residential homes cost the local authority an average of £188 more per client per week than external residential homes. In addition, some of this provision is housed in buildings that are now showing the limitations of their design, even when the fabric is in good condition and whilst dedicated staff add enormous value to the lives of those who live in our homes, the accommodation is inherently institutional.

As at January 4th 2016, 93% of nursing and residential spaces, including EMI (*elderly mentally infirm*) spaces were occupied. The number of social care funded care home placements has reduced in recent years, despite the older population increasing. This reflects the increase of older people choosing to remain independent in their own homes for as long as possible.

It's recognised that in preventing the need for higher level support for longer through preventative support, the need for specialist nursing care may increase. It is however anticipated that access to nursing care could now be at a later stage in life, with the shift due to the collaboration of preventative services that promote independence and prolonged health and well-being.

Table 4

	Number of Individual Places (units)
Local Authority owned Residential Homes	372
Privately owned Residential and/or Nursing Homes	1125

The cost of residential and/or nursing care to the client is dependent on an individual financial assessment. The overall annual costs to the local authority are detailed in table 5.

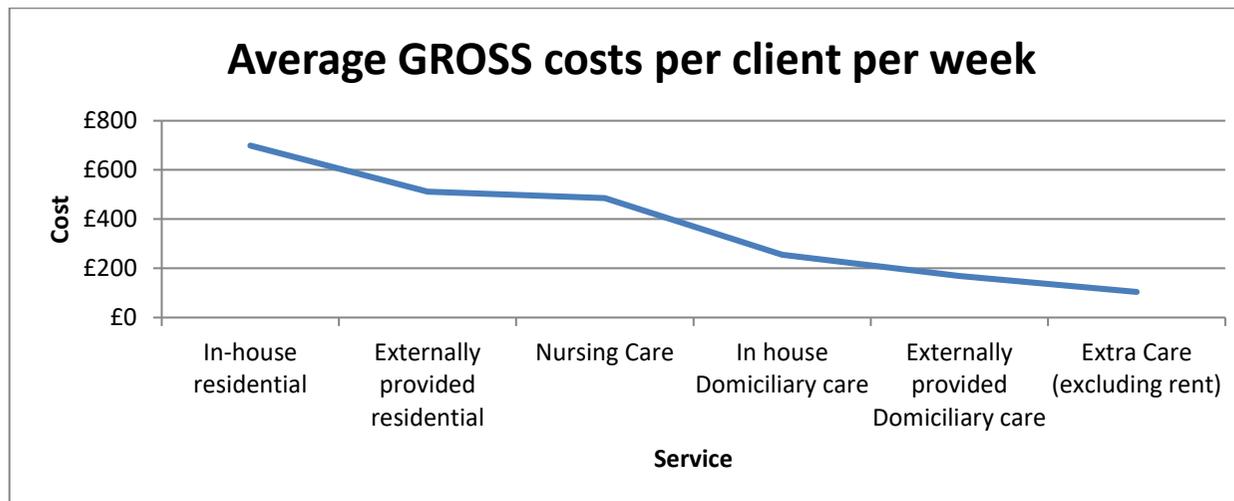
Table 5

Residential Care	Annual expenditure by local authority:
Local authority residential homes	£7,149,029
Private residential homes	£5,521,367
Total spend on Residential Care:	£12,670,396
Nursing Care	
Nursing Homes (external)	£4,787,010
Total local authority annual expenditure on nursing and residential care:	£17,457,406

Comparative summary

Figure 4 demonstrates the relationship between the costs of residential care, nursing care, extra care and domiciliary care packages. The figures represent the GROSS average per client, per week; therefore client contributions have not been subtracted and would be variable depending on individual financial circumstances. Extra care costs have been projected based on the cost of schemes in the neighbouring authorities. Actual costs will not be available until the scheme is populated in summer 2016. Costs will also vary depending on individual tenants' support packages.

Figure 4



Adaptable Homes

Social housing

To ensure people in later life have the widest possible choice of accommodation, adapted properties are advertised through Choice based Lettings in accordance with Rhondda Cynon Taf's Housing Allocation Scheme. When advertising such properties the advertisement provides information about the level of adaptations and or accessibility features to enable applicants to make informed decisions. Adapted properties will be offered first to the applicant in the highest band and earliest date of application and whose needs best match the property size, adaptations and accessibility. The social landlord works with the successful applicant, their occupational therapist and support team to ensure that any bespoke adaptations can be carried out prior to property completion of new builds. There is limited availability of adapted housing across the borough and tenure is limited to social renting when applying through the Common Housing Register. However, the Housing Allocation Scheme helps to ensure the existing social housing stock is utilised as efficiently as possible to help meet the needs of those requiring adaptations. The policy requires all existing ground floor properties and bungalows to be offered to applicants requiring adaptations in the first instance, with minor retrofit adaptations if necessary. The needs of some applicants are though so acute that they are highly unlikely to be met by the existing social housing stock turning over.

The Local Housing Market Assessment; conducted every two years, considers the Common Housing Register waiting list, household projections, homelessness presentations, social housing lets and new build developments due to come forward amongst other data sources. The range of data is scrutinised to calculate the annual housing needs of the locality over the next five years. As part of this process, the need for adapted housing is identified by highlighting specific areas where there is a shortfall of adapted accommodation that is unlikely to be met by existing properties becoming available or new build opportunities.

To address this shortfall, the Affordable Housing Investment Guide provided to the local developing housing associations identifies areas where new build social housing is required. The need for fully wheelchair accessible adapted properties is also specified and prioritised as part of new build developments in the Social Housing Grant Programme. These properties are built to maximum DQR (*development quality requirements*)

wheelchair accessible specification to potentially meet the needs of households requiring a fully accessible property. Any additional modifications can then be added to the property following an OT assessment.

Private Sector

It's recognised that whilst bungalows and adapted properties are available on the open market; they seldom form part of new housing developments, yet continue to be sought after. Few homes are also built to the 'lifetime home' standards or Development Quality Requirements (DQR). In a recent study conducted for Welsh Government it was established that the adaptation of a standard home cost on average **£4,255.04** more than the adaptation of a home built to DQR or lifetime home specifications. The Council supports a landlord forum, which presents an opportunity to communicate the need for this type of development within the local authority. This need is reinforced by planning records which show whereby only a small number of bungalows being built over the last 5 years.

What else are we doing in Rhondda Cynon Taf?

Housing and Health Action Area

The Housing and Health Action Area project enables the Council, Public Health Wales, Cwm Taf University Health Board along with other services to work closely together in a concentrated area to improve home conditions and consequently reduce the likelihood of accidents in the home or other factors that could be detrimental to one's health. This approach consists of a health check on the home and the completion of a health survey by the resident. This is followed up with adaptations to the home where needed and a referral to the relevant agency should the resident wish to receive support with a health related concern. The target areas for 2015-2018 are Tylorstown and Penrhys

50 + Forum

The 50+ Forums, in partnership with Cwm Taf University Health Board and Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council, hold events to engage with the older public. Through discussion with the Older People's Advisory Group (OPAG), the chosen topic for 2014/15 was Health & Wellbeing. In the spirit of the Social Services & Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014, these events highlight what's available in the local area to promote the health and wellbeing of people aged 50+ and to support them to take responsibility of their own health and well being. These Events promoted integrated working with Health and Social Care Services working alongside individuals, families and communities. Events were held in the Localities to give people ownership and showcase what is available to them in their own area.

Affordable Warmth

There are a number of projects currently running in RCT to make homes warmer, including the Warm Homes scheme funded by Welsh Government as part of the Vibrant and Viable Places initiative (VVP). Other schemes include Keep Warm this Winter and the distribution of our Warm Home Packs to residents over the age of 50. The distribution of thermometers and carbon monoxide alarms promote warm homes and energy efficiency. RCT's Housing Energy Efficiency Officer engages with residents to ensure residents access the relevant funding streams and make their homes warmer and more fuel efficient places to live.

Dementia Friendly Communities

Pontypridd and Maerdy are working to become Dementia Friendly Communities. Through the Dementia Friendly Communities programme, a coalition of organisations work together to change society's attitudes towards dementia with the aim of improving the lives of people living with dementia. The Alzheimer's Society believe 'a dementia-friendly community is one in which people with dementia are empowered to have high aspirations and feel confident, knowing they can contribute and participate in activities that are meaningful to them.' Rhondda Cynon Taf is continuing to work with the Alzheimer's Society to increase the number of communities aspiring to become dementia friendly.

Section Three - Key Points

- Population growth is evident in the older age bracket, with a 14% increase expected by 2025
- There is a common preference for those in later life to remain in their own home, only 1% expressed an interest in moving to a complex with people of similar ages
- RCT currently have a range of services which aim to maximise independence and prevent the need of more specialist support
- Supported living options in RCT currently consist of mostly sheltered accommodation complexes
- There are a total of 37 care homes in RCT. The local authority contributes £17 million per year towards the cost of residential and nursing care.
- Extra Care housing improves opportunities for independence and quality of life for older people and is a significantly lower cost option than Extra Care.



Section 4 - Where we want to be

The issues identified as a result of public engagement exercises and review of existing services outlined in Section 2 and 3 have been categorised into three main strategic areas for focus. In order to address the key issues in each theme, strategic aims and objectives have been identified. These will be addressed through the delivery of an Action Plan over the next two to three years.

Strategic Aim One: Person centred and preventative support to minimise the escalation of critical need

A person centred approach allows support to be tailored according to individual needs. In providing early, collaborative support, prevention becomes in-built, enabling independence for longer. This support can be wide ranging from basic adaptations, to tailored domiciliary care packages or moving to a more adaptable home or form of supported living. The approach should enable people in later life to make their own informed choices that will promote good health and well-being, provide good quality housing and therefore prolong independence.

The objectives:

- To support the decision to remain in the home of choice and retain independence and quality of life
- To renew focus on good quality provision with emphasis on an integrated approach to early intervention and preventative support services to avoid dependence on higher level support

What issues have been identified?

- Delayed decisions to choose alternative accommodation result in increased difficulties when it comes to moving home
- No 'one size fits all' approach works as later life starts at different times for different people
- The approach at present appears reactive and not preventative, meaning many people in later life need to access residential care, maybe more prematurely than if preventative action had been taken sooner.

What do we want to achieve?

- We want to achieve a range of proactive not reactive support services, working together to enable individuals to maintain optimum levels of independence and well being
- We want sustainable options of housing and support that provide better outcomes for people in later life

How will we achieve it?

- Timely and innovative adaptations to existing homes, which will enable independent living for longer
- Collaborative working across housing, health and well-being related support
- A focus on preventative services and support packages
- Promotion of the link between poor quality housing and deteriorating health
- Working with housing providers and adult social care to prevent the need of those in much later life moving out of modern sheltered schemes and onto residential care

Strategic Aim 2: Accessible Information, Advice and Assistance

In line with the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) 2014 Act, we are committed to developing and shaping accessibility to information, advice and guidance and identifying the need for advocacy where appropriate. With the aim of promoting control over day-to-day life and ensuring information is easily accessible and transparent, a single point of access should be developed and promoted.

The objectives:

- To develop a person centred, individualised approach to housing service delivery and housing options for older people
- Ensure information, advice, assistance and advocacy are easily accessible, enabling informed decisions that promote optimum levels of independence, well-being and control

What issues have been identified?

- No single point of access referenced by members of the public
- Majority of 'First response' calls reported to be for a named social worker and not as a single point of access for information and advice for all
- Anxiety around means testing and savings disclosure for home adaptations that could prolong independence
- A common mistrust of private builders and handyperson schemes
- Misinformed perceptions of sheltered accommodation

What do we want to achieve?

- We want to achieve a person centred, easily accessible single point of access for information, advice and assistance, which will enable informed decisions at the most appropriate time and add to the development of new and future provision.

How will we achieve it?

- Through increased accessibility to a single point of information, advice and assistance through promotion and communication and support people to plan for housing in later life
- Promotion and communication around adaptation services and grants
- Factual information around the provision available to dispel myths and overcome stigmas and address mismatches between supply and demand

Strategic Aim Three: Good quality Housing choice that promotes independence and well-being

Housing choice is currently limited for people in later life, often centred around social housing. The demand for residential care in RCT has reduced in recent years despite the older population increasing. The pattern depicts a smaller proportion of people in the later stages of life becoming reliant upon residential care and instead choosing to remain independent in their own home. Focusing resources on extra care and reducing residential based care would better match the change in demographic and evidence from local research regarding older persons housing aspirations. In preventing the need for higher level support for longer, it is however recognised that whilst the need for residential care may continue to reduce, nursing care needs may increase. Promotion of the choices available, with a transparent and factual approach, will enable people in later life to make timely decisions that could prolong independence and health and promote holistic well-being.

The objectives:

- To develop a range of quality accommodation in a variety of tenures, along with flexible support services that efficiently meet the needs of and provide choice for people in later life now and in the future
- To develop services according to what people in later life tell us when thinking about their future housing options
- To develop accommodation services that contribute to a cohesive community
- To reconfigure the accommodation model to support the changing demographics of older people

What issues have been identified?

- A reluctance to consider options apart from living in one's own home
- Limited tenure in accessing accommodation with support
- Over supply of sheltered housing
- Poor quality housing having detrimental effect on health and consequently independent living
- A change in demographic, with the need for residential care falling in recent years
- Loneliness and isolation

What do we want to achieve?

We want to achieve:

- Greater choice and control for people in later life
- Improved accommodation options for people in later life, including private sector options
- Continued improvement of nursing care
- Increase in Extra Care accommodation
- A reduction in local authority owned residential care homes by at least 50%
- An alternative, amenable and sustainable accommodation model that provides a continuum of options to suit changing demographics and prolongs independence
- Options that support people to feel part of a cohesive community

How will we achieve it?

- Increase the number of Extra care housing units in Rhondda Cynon Taf from 42 to 475 over the next 10 years by working with our partners to identify new locations and the reconfiguration of existing schemes.
- The decommissioning and redevelopment of schemes where appropriate
- Increase the capacity in the market for EMI residential care and EMI nursing care placements commissioned from providers who deliver good quality and best practice care
- Communication and promotion around sheltered accommodation to address the associated myths and therefore the mismatch between supply and demand
- Community use of spaces with sheltered and extra care schemes, with regular open days and 'test drive' schemes

- Through working with private developers to communicate the desire for adaptable/flexible properties/bungalows on new development sites
- Continued investigation into financial support options to combat fuel poverty

Section Four - Key Points

Through the issues identified, the strategic function will be focused on:

- A person centred approach to support and prevention to minimise the escalation of critical need
- Easily accessible information and advice
- Good quality housing choice that promotes prolonged independence, health and well-being



Appendix 1- Glossary

Accessible homes:	Homes that can be used by anyone irrespective of whether they are disabled or infirm.
Adapted Property:	Dwelling which has been altered to suit the specific needs of the residents.
Cohesive Communities:	Communities working together.
Demographic:	A measure of the population by age, sex, social status, employment etc.

Domically Care:	Care in your home. (Home care)
EMI:	Elderly mentally infirm.
Extra Care Schemes:	Independent living with on site care and support.
DQR:	Development Quality Requirements.
Fuel Poverty:	Households spending 10% or more of their income on fuel.
Homogenous:	Similar.
Lifetime Homes:	Homes that are easily adaptable for lifetime use.
Means Tested:	Method of determining whether someone qualifies for financial assistance.
Multi-agency working:	Departments working together and with Non Governmental Organisations to provide a better, more balanced service.
Nursing Home:	Accommodation for someone who doesn't need to be in hospital but cannot be cared for at home.
ONS:	Office for National Statistics.
Residential Care:	Long term care away from the home.
RSL:	Registered Social Landlord/Housing Associations
SIP:	Single Integrated Plan.
Sheltered Housing:	Independent living in self contained flat.
Strategy:	A plan of action designed to achieve a long term or overall aim.

