

Step 5: Understand the commissioning landscape

Introduction



This step is about understanding how, and in what way, the business case for housing options for older adults fits with the commissioning of adult social care services, and the potential knock-on effects of investing in different housing models on the rest of the market. It involves working with adult social care commissioners to understand the current commissioning landscape, including what is currently commissioned, and future commissioning priorities, particularly with respect to housing for older people. It also involves working with potential investors and developers to understand what information about commissioning they would find helpful and would support them in making investment decisions.

Aside from the importance of commissioning in relation to the business case, those involved in developing a housing plan may not have a good understanding of commissioning, including older adults. It will help with conversations and planning if everyone has some understanding of the local commissioning system and priorities.

This isn't necessarily a sequential step, but something that can happen in conjunction with all steps, to best ensure that the adult social care landscape is a 'data point' that feeds into the provision and development outlined in the business case for housing with care and support. One way to achieve this is to have an adult social care commissioner be part of the housing partnership team developing the business case.

This is important to your business case because adult social care commissioning is one part of the longer-term financial stability of housing with care and support provision. Investors and developers need to be reassured that the business case for housing with care doesn't sit in isolation from the wider commissioning landscape.

How to?



Talk to commissioners of adult social care to understand:

- The strategic objectives of adult social care, the legal requirements under the Care Act, the national and local context, for example, demographic challenges, reduced funding and the pressures on the social care workforce and market.
- How adult social care commissioning works in their local area, for example, which public bodies are involved, the funding sources, the populations served, the services provided, and process of procurement and contracting.

- Trends in demand for, and spend on, different adult social care services and any projections of demand for different types of services.
- The aims and priorities for adult social care, in particular any commitments to developing/expanding different types of housing with care and support and timescales associated with these priorities.
- Sense checking steps 1-4 and discussing how the business case can support work of commissioners.

Talk to potential investors and developers to understand:

- Their current understanding of adult social care commissioning and what further information would be helpful in informing their investment decision-making process.
- Their views on how adult social care commissioning can help support the development of, and investment in, housing with care and support.



SOURCES OF INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

- Kings Fund: Social Care in a nutshell.
- Access group: Commissioning cycle in social care.
- DLUP: Social care resources.
- Kings Fund: What is commissioning and how is it changing?
- The Care Act 2014: Responsibilities of local authorities.
- SCIE: Care act, assessment and eligibility.



PARTNERS TO INVOLVE

- Adult social care commissioners, integrated care board, investors and developers.





TIPS ON CO-PRODUCTION

The 'I' and 'We' statements below are illustrative examples of co-production outcomes associated with this step. We encourage housing partnerships to adapt them as they see fit to best reflect their local context.

For individuals:

- I understand what commissioning is, how local organisations work together to deliver housing, and how it affects my access to services and housing for older people.
- I define the key messages that need to be communicated when describing the commissioning landscape based on how it affects my housing options and access to services.

For the partnership:

- We facilitate individuals' understanding of the objectives and process of commissioning, local organisations and partnerships involved, and how these affect individuals' access to services and the local market for housing for older people.
- We have conversations and take on board individuals' views on the key messages that need to be communicated when describing the local commissioning landscape.

Further information about the benefits of and principles of co-production, as well as examples of co-production in the housing sector can be found [here](#).



CHANGES TO THE ADULT SOCIAL CARE COMMISSIONING LANDSCAPE

“Commissioning arrangements have evolved since their introduction, including through numerous changes to the structure and remit of the organisations that commission care. The underlying philosophy of commissioning has also changed over time with a move away from transactional models and towards greater partnership working. These changes are all part of enabling a shift towards strategic commissioning and a more collaborative approach to planning and improving services. This means that, instead of focusing on procurement and contract management, the role of commissioners is to work closely with key partners across the system (including providers) to understand population needs, determine key priorities and design, plan and resource services to meet those needs.” ([The King's Fund: What is commissioning and how is it changing?](#))

First published in Great Britain in April 2024 by the Social Care Institute for Excellence

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Updated in April 2024

Toolkit available at: <https://www.scie.org.uk/housing/toolkit-for-place-based-plans-for-housing-for-older-adults/>

