

Toolkit for place-based strategies for housing for autistic adults and adults with a learning disability



Background

“Everyone should be able to access housing that is accessible, meets their needs, supports their engagement and participation in the community, and is safe, affordable and provides security and stability to build life upon...”

...Failure to grasp this challenge will see more people with a learning disability left without housing options for the future, experiencing homelessness, or languishing in hospitals, and a new generation of young people unable to realise their aspirations to be part of society and make their way in life.”

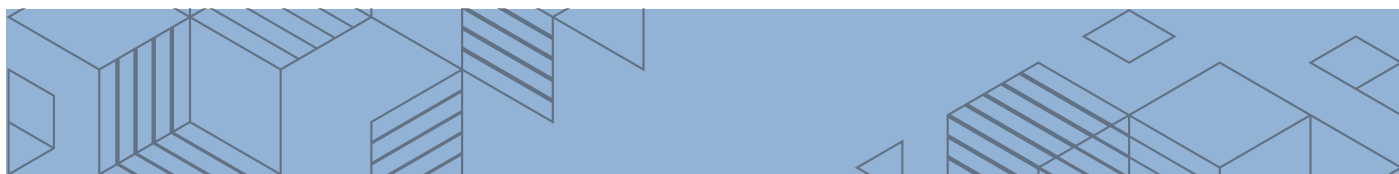
Jon Sparkes OBE, Chief Executive, Royal Mencap Society
([National Housing Federation blog](#), 2024)

Where people live should be their choice, and this is equally so for autistic adults and adults with a learning disability. However, the [Housing LIN](#) (Learning and Improvement Network) estimate a shortfall of between 27,000 to 34,500 units of supported housing for autistic people and people with a learning disability by 2037, or around 1,800 to 2,200 units of accommodation per annum.

While there has been a focus on the national housing strategy, and the Government's ambition to build 1.5 million new homes, at a local level there is an opportunity to plan for and deliver more accessible general and supported housing options as a part of that wider strategy.

Local strategies for housing for autistic adults and adults with a learning disability can help local areas to better understand where they are now in relation to housing options, where they would like to be, and identify their next steps and priorities in order to get there. They are essential for medium- and longer-term planning, focussing on a five to 20-year horizon as well as considering the current needs.

This toolkit is funded by DHSC and is designed to support local areas, strategically and methodically, in thinking about and creating their housing strategies for autistic adults and adults with a learning disability. It may additionally support local authorities to meet the anticipated requirements of the [Supported Housing \(Regulatory Oversight\) Act 2023](#).





Considering the diversity of preferences and needs of autistic adults and adults with a learning disability

Autistic adults and adults with a learning disability are as diverse as any other group. When thinking about housing it is essential to understand people's daily lives, goals and preferences as well as any support needs they may have, including a need for specialised design or adapted housing. In relation to the provision of housing options as well as care and support, there are differences in terms of funding streams, and in the housing options likely to be most suitable. As such, in this toolkit we will at times refer to the level of care or support needs of autistic adults and adults with a learning disability.

High needs

This group have a need for a high level of support and may be hospital inpatients or at risk of hospital inpatient admission.

The NHS is more likely to be involved with housing and support and NHS funding such as Continuing Healthcare (CHC) may be available.

High or moderate needs

This group have care and support needs that are eligible for support under the Care Act (2014) and so the local authority may provide this unless the person is a self-funder.

Moderate or low needs

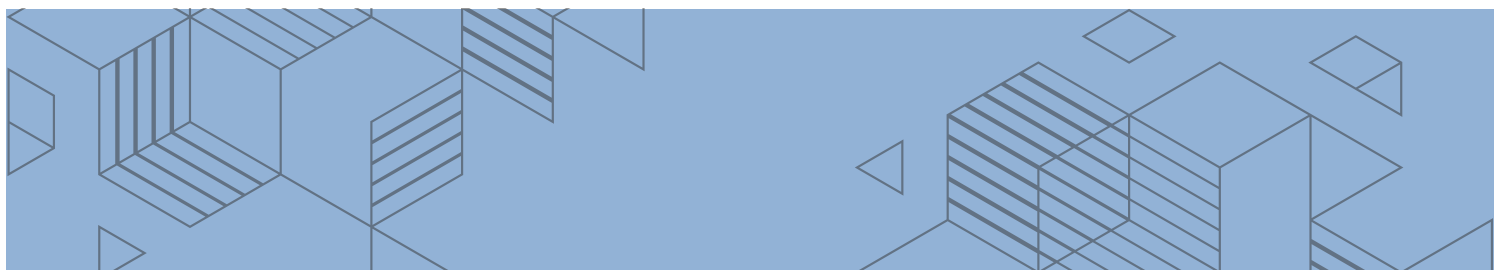
This group does not have care and support needs that meet the criteria for local authority support under the Care Act (2014). While most autistic adults and adults with a learning disability are in this group, they may still benefit from suitable housing options that are difficult to find in the general housing market.



There's no 'one size fits all'

To develop housing options that people want and will choose to live in, housing options cannot only be about people's support needs and the types of housing adaptations that relate to those support needs. Rather, an understanding of the whole person in terms of their preferences, strengths, community, aspirations, family and the potential impact of what may be a significant transition.

A set of housing options are given below, with the ambition being that a range of options are available to meet preferences and needs, to support individuals, families and communities.





Housing options for autistic adults and adults with a learning disability

This section summarises the main models of housing with support for autistic adults and adults with a learning disability. These definitions are based on those outlined by LGA and ADASS in their [housing pipeline resource](#). While these definitions describe a range of typical models that may be developed, in practice features may vary or overlap depending on individuals and the nature of the local area. Options may also be new build or adapted from existing buildings depending on the circumstance. There is more information in relation to design standards in step 6 – Drawing on best practice.

General housing: The majority of autistic adults and adults with a learning disability live in general housing, often with family. This housing may have some adaptations or be accessible. People may need to be supported in relation to accessing appropriate rental agreements, mortgages, shared ownership, etc.

Specialist bespoke supported accommodation: Accommodation built to higher accessibility standards, including considering the design needs of autistic people. Accommodation is either provided as single occupancy bungalows or clustered flats. Normally no shared areas are provided and there are staff facilities on site. New developments may be built to accessibility standards. On-site care is provided 24 hours a day with the number of carers to support each person varying to meet individual needs.

Bespoke single occupancy property: The property may need to be fitted with sound proofing and other design features to support the person living there. The location of the property may need to meet a range of requirements. They are normally a one bed property with another room/space for carers and can be a new build or renovation. On-site care is provided 24 hours a day with the number of carers to support each person varying to meet individual needs.

Purpose built supported accommodation - clustered flats: Mainly provided as single occupancy flats clustered together with some communal areas. The property would normally be built to robust standards and meet accessibility standards. They can be new build or renovation. The level of care and support can vary, with most providing on-site background support 24 hours a day, with the number of carers to support each person varying to meet individual needs.

Purpose built supported accommodation - hub and spoke: The 'hub' is usually long-term accommodation that provides on-site background support. On-site care is provided 24 hours a day with the number of carers to support each person varying to meet individual needs. The 'spoke' refers to dispersed one bedroom accommodation which would receive background support from the hub for those people with lower needs. The spoke may also provide some small, shared units. This accommodation can be new build or renovation.

Designated general needs housing with support - clustered flats: A cluster of designated general needs housing with support flats. Normally this would be a new build development but could involve existing general needs units let outside the normal lettings process. There may only be background support, or it could be combined with one-to-one support.



Community living networks in dispersed housing: This involves support being provided by a combination of paid workers and volunteers to a number of dispersed properties. Dispersed general needs social housing is allocated through the normal council processes, with private rented sector lettings also accessed. Dispersed accommodation can include shared ownership units.

Extra care housing - generic: Extra care housing that is for a mixture of needs and ages. Often it is mainly older people that live there, but also younger adults with disabilities, including people with a learning disability with lower needs. 24-hour background support is provided to all, with individual care based on an assessment of need. These are purpose-built developments that meet accessibility standards. Rental, shared ownership and leasehold may be available.

Extra care housing - older people (also known as integrated retirement communities): Extra care housing for people aged 55 and over. These developments can include older people with a variety of needs, including people with a learning disability who require low-level support. 24-hour background support is provided to all, with individual care based on an assessment of need. These are purpose-built developments that meet accessibility standards. Rental, shared ownership and leasehold may be available.

Shared Lives: Offers people who require care and support the opportunity to live independently in the community and can be an alternative to living in supported housing. The Shared Lives scheme matches people with an approved carer. The carer shares their family and community life. Some people live with their Shared Lives carer, while others are regular day-time visitors. Some people combine day-time visits with overnight stays.



How to use the toolkit

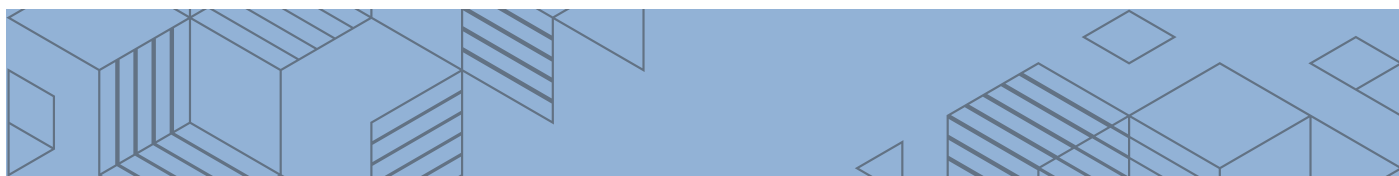
This toolkit is designed to be flexible around the needs, context and existing strategies, policies and structures within a local area. It can be taken as a whole, or different steps can be used to guide individual activities. We have suggested an order for each activity or 'step', but this too can be flexible.

Population or housing types

Local areas should decide which population they will focus on. While the main intention for the toolkit is for it to be inclusive of all autistic adults and adults with a learning disability in a local area, it could be used to focus on those who draw on care and support or a sub-group within that. The toolkit should be used for the groups and housing types that are most helpful to that area and the process and steps are also appropriate to other groups such as physically disabled people.

Steps

The steps outlined are those identified as needed to create an outward facing strategy for a local area. As outlined in the following sections on leadership and vision and co-production principles, these should be grounded in strong partnership working and co-production with autistic adults and adults with a learning disability and their families. This will enable organisations and funders



to understand the key needs and attributes of a local area in relation to housing for autistic adults and adults with a learning disability and what the priorities and expectations are of that local authority. An outward facing strategy can encourage greater engagement with organisations and funders and provide them with the information they need to guide decisions about potential investment. We highlight which steps relate to which section of a strategy and vice versa.

It may be that a fully detailed strategy is not yet achievable, but a combination of steps will still provide helpful insights to guide and prioritise local activities. Local areas should dip into the toolkit as they find helpful, using the steps to build on what they already have, or as a way of getting started.

Related strategies and reports

Local authorities, as well as other organisations may already have other related or relevant reports and strategies, either relating specifically to autistic adults and adults with a learning disability or to wider housing, health, social care and community. The aim is not to try and encompass them all in one plan, but to build on, signpost and make all those involved in a local plan for housing for autistic adults and adults with a learning disability aware of the range of activities that may be happening across groups and departments.

In the future, one such related activity within local authorities relates to the Supported Housing (Regulatory Oversight) Act 2023 which gained royal ascent on 29 August 2023 with formal consultation on the draft regulations running from February to May, 2025. The Act relates to supported exempt accommodation (supported housing that is exempt from the usual caps of housing benefit level), some of which is housing for autistic adults and adults with a learning disability. The Act includes obligations on local authorities to develop strategic supported housing plans quantifying existing supply and local need.

From strategy to delivery

This toolkit supports the creation of a strategy and is not a guide for the delivery of that plan. However, by bringing together a housing partnership and developing a strategy, issues in relation to the delivery of that plan will certainly arise. There is an opportunity to be discussing and moving forward with changes within local planning policy and within local health and social care planning that would better support the delivery of the strategy. That will be more likely if the relevant partners have been involved in the development of the strategy from the outset.



Getting started – vision and leadership

Housing for autistic adults and adults with a learning disability



Introduction

Developing a strategy for housing for autistic adults and adults with a learning disability, is not something one department can do on its own. Many examples of housing options for autistic people and people with a learning disability involve multiple organisations and fundings streams as well as people and their families. Therefore, a strategy also needs to reflect the essential role of partnership working and the range of expertise, experience, and perspectives it can bring. Ideally, any strategy should be shaped by what we are referring to as a 'housing partnership'.

A housing partnership can:

- Ensure the right people are in the room with the range of expertise needed to develop a robust housing plan.
- Support co-production and shared decision-making with autistic adults and adults with a learning disability, their families, and the wider community.
- Help identify local data and information held by different partners to avoid duplicating effort.
- Ensure buy-in of any plan, greatly enabling the delivery of that plan.
- Ensure that people's housing rights and rights under the Care Act (2014) are understood and prioritised across teams and organisations.





Who could be part of a housing partnership?

Every local area is different, but some of the key groups that should be involved in the various stages of local plans for housing for autistic adults and adults with a learning disability are:

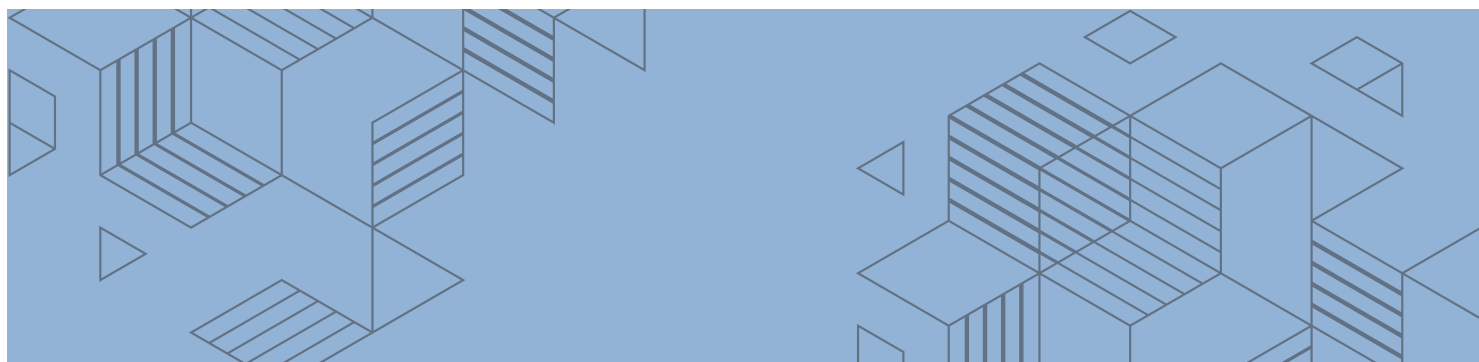
- Autistic adults and adults with a learning disability, family carers, representative groups, charities, user-led and community groups
- Senior local authority leaders and executives focussed on housing, social care, autistic adults and adults with a learning disability
- Local authority social services, occupational therapists, social workers, community workers and older adults teams
- Local authority housing and planning departments, housing benefits lead, disabled facilities grant lead, as well as finance/corporate resources that relates to housing and/or autistic adults and adults with a learning disability
- Senior NHS leaders, including those focussed on autistic adults and adults with a learning disability
- Local authority and NHS commissioners (covering all ages, including mental health, specialist learning disability and autism commissioners)
- NHS discharge teams, community health and occupational therapists and multiagency teams
- Elected members: County, Borough Parish or Town councillors
- Builders, planners and architects
- Social care providers
- Registered and unregistered social housing providers
- Property developers and property investors.



General advice and signposting

There are organisations that may be relevant locally that would be useful to speak to for general advice and signposting to key information, but who may not join a local housing partnership. These include:

- The Care Quality Commission (CQC)
- NHS England's learning disability and autism regional senior housing manager
- Mayoral Combined Authority housing strategy team.





Getting the right people in the room

Bringing together a local housing partnership can be difficult, both to initiate and to sustain. Local areas will already have some joint working and partnerships in place, but these can often be for specific delivery activities rather than wider prioritisation and planning.

To bring an initial group together requires leadership and time to be set aside for relationship building. Joint priorities should be established early so that everyone can see the overall aims and where they or their organisation fits in. Attention should be paid to the language being used, including acronyms and jargon. Try to ensure all conversations are as accessible as possible to all groups. Responsibilities and areas of expertise should be established so everyone can see how they can contribute to the strategy and what responsibility they will have.

Developing a long-term vision for the area can mean stepping away from day-to-day delivery pressures. Having a mixed perspective in the room can support people to think creatively about a housing future for the area.



LEADERSHIP

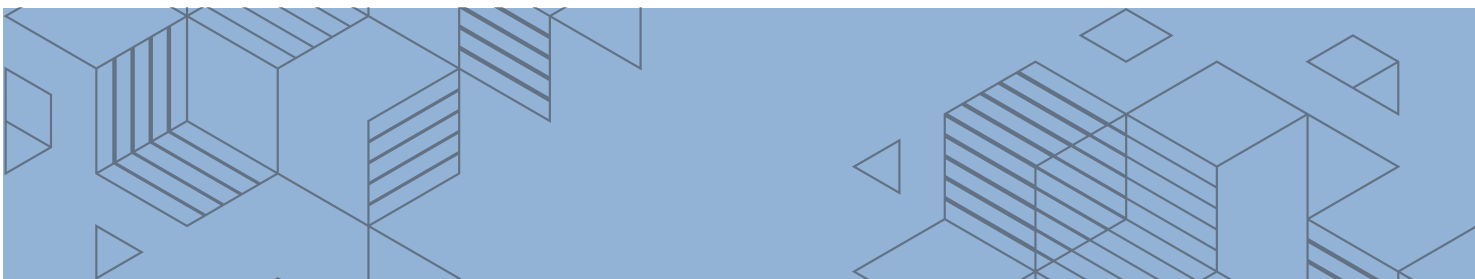
While a local housing partnership is pivotal in developing a housing plan for autistic adults and adults with a learning disability that meets the needs of the area, leadership is needed to ensure there is support and buy-in at a senior level, including the local authority and the Integrated Care Partnership.

A memorandum of understanding (MOU) could support the setting out of next steps at a senior level and to demonstrate the ambition of any plan and the development of that plan.



Funding and resource to develop a strategy

Additional resource and/or funding is likely to be needed to develop an inclusive and implementable strategy. Local authorities that have undertaken or are in the process of undertaking these activities have applied for funding for a post to support or lead on this work. The toolkit can be a useful way to outline the activities that need to be undertaken and why they are important.





CASE STUDY: THE 'SERIOUS GAME' FOR BUILDING A HOUSING PARTNERSHIP

As part of the Greater Manchester (GM) adult social care transformation programme, the complex needs project brings together commissioners, support providers and housing providers to develop the right support solutions for people. The project is led by the GM Directors of Adult Social Services.

The overall aim of the project is to enable people to have the right support in the right place at the right time, and to live gloriously ordinary lives.

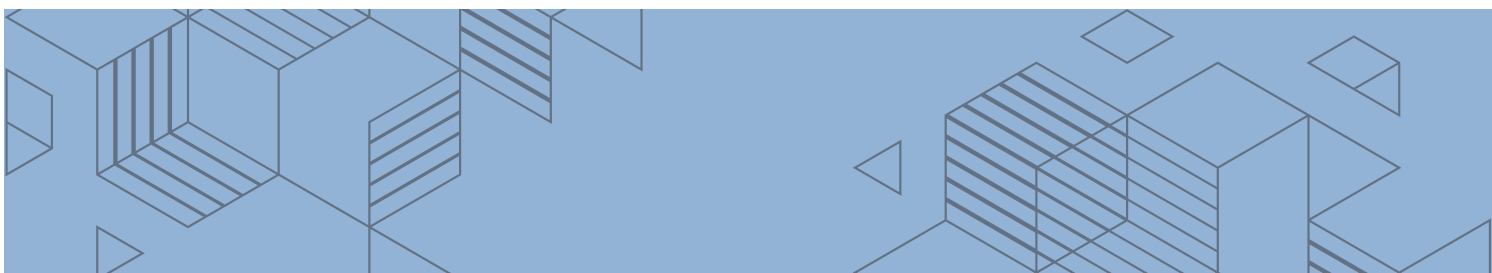
The foundations of the Greater Manchester complex needs project were extensively co-produced with people and families who have lived experience of learning disability, autism, and of using mental health services. This approach is embedded within the ongoing project.

Since June 2022, the project has supported 18 people with learning disabilities, autism and mental health needs to resettlement from long-term hospital placements from across England, into nine newly created supported living properties in Greater Manchester. A further 14 people will move into new homes during 2025. Two small apartment schemes for autistic young people are being created in Manchester, which will open in 2026 and 2027.

Every new project starts with an understanding of where people aspire to live and with whom, their sensory and environmental considerations for housing, their health goals and support preferences. This person-centred approach keeps people at the heart of the project – and has led to more successful and sustained outcomes after people are discharged from hospital.

The overall approach is supported by a number of enablers:

- A Greater Manchester complex needs framework of nine great support providers, each appointed with different specialisms. People requiring different forms of support can be best matched to the most appropriate provider for them.
- A Greater Manchester housing provider agreement. This includes seven registered housing providers who have committed to developing the best kinds of supported housing for people being discharged through the complex needs project.
- A memorandum of understanding (MOU). The purpose of this agreement is to have clear, reciprocal arrangements across Greater Manchester local authorities and NHS Greater Manchester, for whenever support arrangements are commissioned through the complex needs project. The MOU clarifies the roles and responsibilities of the placing authority and host authorities. A copy of the MOU can be found [here](#).



The fourth 'enabler' is the maturity and breadth of the relationships and leadership.

The project benefits from the unwavering support and leadership of the 10 Directors of Adult Social Services in Greater Manchester. It is hosted by an established Adult Social Care Transformation Team, led by Director Jo Chilton.

This quality of vision and leadership has been pivotal for the project leads to drive financially committed supported housing programmes with registered housing provider partners, which are choosing to develop great homes, in high quality areas where people want to live. It has also enabled project leads to negotiate supportive conversations with commissioners across Greater Manchester, on behalf of people seeking discharge so they can begin living in homes and places tailored to their preferences.

For further information:

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Debbie Simister, Senior Programme Manager – Learning Disabilities and Autism. Deborah.simister@nhs.net



Co-producing a place-based strategy for housing for autistic adults and adults with a learning disability



Introduction

Co-producing a strategy will help to ensure that decisions about housing for autistic adults and adults with a learning disability, priorities and investment opportunities are in line with the needs of the local community. Co-production will benefit the strategy case by helping the partnership with:

- A better understanding of people's vision, aspirations, and housing needs.
- Understanding new unmet needs previously not identified.
- Increasing the level of buy-in and uptake of the strategy, in particular the housing with care and support options proposed, thereby facilitating implementation and upscaling.
- Developing a collaborative relationship between partners, customers, and stakeholders that will be key for delivering housing options for autistic adults and adults with a learning disability.

As well as the benefits outlined above, co-production will help the partnership navigate the different steps of the toolkit. The guidance supports co-production for each step of the toolkit, and the strategy as a whole, and is rooted in SCIE's principles for co-production, presented below.

It is not assumed that those involved in a housing partnership would already be experienced in co-production and so they may need support and skills development. Similarly, autistic adults and adults with a learning disability and others in the community who participate in co-production may benefit from additional support with some activities and opportunities to gain skills for them to fully engage and contribute. It may help to view it as a joint journey where no one starts off with all the answers, but everyone is willing to learn.

The co-production approach for this toolkit was developed in partnership with members of the [Pro-Active Community](#) co-production group. We thank all members for their invaluable involvement.



Principles of co-production

Equality

One of the key benefits of co-producing a business case is to gain insights from and share decision-making power with people who are experts in their own housing, care and support needs. Their views are key to the successful delivery of housing options for autistic adults and adults with a learning disability and their input should have equal weight in deciding the development priorities proposed in the business plan.

Diversity

It is key to ensure that the co-production process is inclusive and that all key groups are represented. All groups should also be able to confidently express their views and the decision-making process should reflect an accurate representation of local people's needs.

Accessibility

It is fundamental to maximise people's involvement and to ensure that individuals feel confident and motivated to fully engage in discussions and decision-making. This means ensuring that individuals have the same conditions and opportunities to take part in the process and that barriers are removed. It includes creating a friendly environment, and adapting ways of information sharing and discussion to meet the needs of different groups, thereby facilitating their involvement.

Reciprocity

This is a key concept in co-production and has been defined as ensuring that people benefit from their contributions and everyone 'receives something back from putting something in'. The idea has been linked to 'mutuality' and all parties involved having responsibilities and expectations. Putting reciprocity into practice can help to create a sense of togetherness. There is no doubt that people with lived experience can offer invaluable expertise, and it is important to consider offering payment for their contribution and time.



'I' AND 'WE' STATEMENTS

To support the development of the business case for housing for autistic adults and adults with a learning disability, we have outlined a set of statements to highlight the types of co-production outcomes associated with each of the steps. Please note that these statements are illustrative, and we encourage housing partnerships to adapt them as they see fit to best reflect their local context. The statements are divided in 'I' statements that suggest key outcomes for individuals co-producing the step, and 'We' statements that suggest actions and outcomes to be delivered by the partnership facilitating the development of the strategy. This approach is based on TLAP's (Think Local, Act Personal) 'Making it Real' framework that aims to facilitate the personalisation of care and support. The framework has been applied in different areas of social care including in [Care Quality Commission Assessment Framework](#) and on people's tenancy agreement in different local authorities. Further information can be found [here](#).

SCIE and TLAP have developed guidance on how to effectively plan and run co-production. This guidance can be helpful to support the co-production of the business case and give insights on how to effectively include people with lived experience in the decision-making process. More details can be found on ['Co-production: what it is and how to do it'](#) and summary along with practice examples can be found [here](#).



What is important for me – views of people with lived experience

SCIE spoke to a group of adults with learning disabilities, some of whom are also autistic

scie social care institute for excellence

“What is important to you when thinking about where you would like to live?”

Accessibility and security

 Access to a garden

Adjustable worktops in the kitchen'



Door security buzzers that let me see who's outside



Some prefer to share, others prefer having their own property



Whether sharing or living alone, people like to have some space to themselves

Some people like the social aspects of sharing

Some people would find sharing 'a nightmare'

Location



We want to choose who and what we live near to

Close to the shops

Close to family, partners and friends



Near public transport such as trains and buses

Near to green spaces for walking and seeing nature



It is good to have a range of options so people can choose



USEFUL LINKS

- [Where I Want to Live – Where I want to live toolkit](#)
- [The Challenging Behaviour Foundation – Co-production best practice](#)
- [Housing LIN TAPPI – Co-production guide](#)
- [Housing LIN CollaborAGE – Co-production and community approaches](#)
- [Brain in Hand – Step-by-step practical guide to co-producing with autistic people](#)
- [SCIE – Tackling inequalities in care for people with learning disabilities and autistic people](#)
- [SCIE – Supporting co-production](#)
- [Think Local Act Personal \(TLAP\) – Co-production resources](#)
- [Think Local Act Personal \(TLAP\) – Make it Real Framework](#)



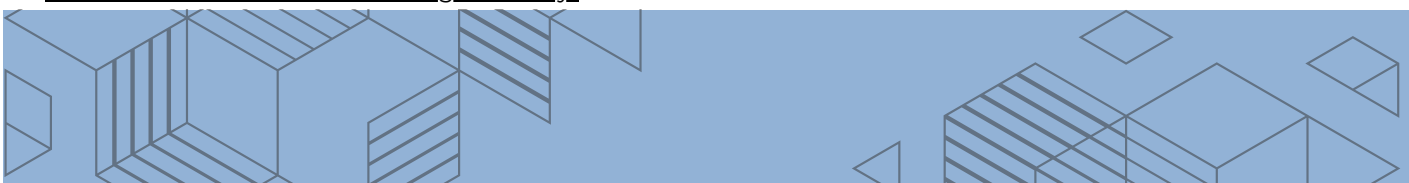
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Toolkit available at: <https://www.scie.org.uk/housing/toolkit-for-place-based-strategies-for-housing-for-autistic-adults-and-adults-with-a-learning-disability/>



Step 1: Understanding demand

Housing for autistic adults and adults with a learning disability



Introduction

Drawing on existing data and information, the first step is to understand your local population, the current supply of homes, and current and future demand for housing with support for autistic adults and adults with a learning disability.

It involves:

- collecting and analysing local demographic, economic, health, social care and housing trends data
- identifying local needs and preferences for housing with support for autistic adults and adults with a learning disability
- carrying out demand projections for different types of housing.

It is important that the information collected reflects the diversity of the local population, for example different ethnic groups, LGBTQ+ communities, people living with dementia and people with visual or hearing impairments. This information will help inform your housing strategy by helping potential investors, planners, providers and development partners, understand the local context, the current and projected demand for different types of housing that meet specific needs of autistic adults and adults with a learning disability, across different localities, and create a delivery plan. This information will also be relevant to the requirements of the Supported Housing (Regulatory Oversight) Act 2023.



KEY QUESTIONS

You will need to collect and analyse data to address the following questions:

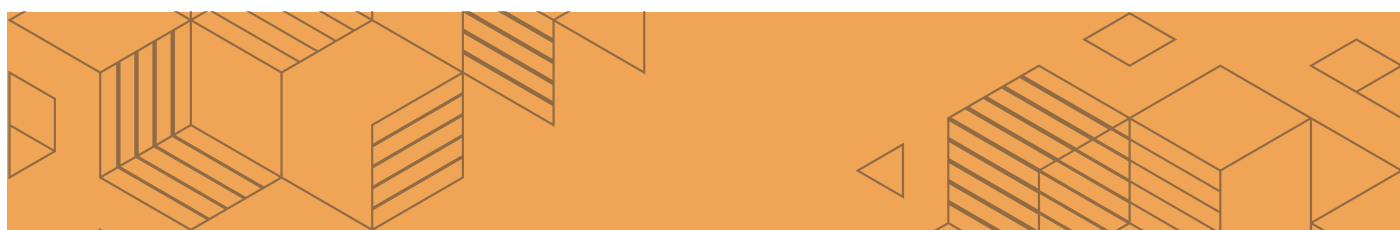
- What do we know about autistic adults and adults with a learning disability local population?
- What do we know about the current living arrangements for autistic adults and adults with a learning disability?
- How suitable is the current provision of housing? Does it require an adaptation or home improvement, or the application of technology to aid independent living, enable at home care and support?
- What is the economic status and what proportion of autistic adults and adults with a learning disability would be Care Act eligible for social and/or means restricted options?
- What do we know about housing needs and preferences?
- What are the projections for local demand for housing?
 - How many young people are likely to transition to adult services each year?
 - How many people are be living with ageing parents and may need to move in future?

How to?



You will need to:

- Outline a demographic overview and socio-economic profile of the local population, focusing particularly on autistic adults and adults with a learning disability. For example, you should highlight age groups, ethnic groups, gender – particularly in relation to underrepresentation of woman, deprivation, health issues, care and support needs, care and support eligibility status, people who fund their own care and support, and unmet needs.
- Highlight any relevant differences across different localities in the local area. Outline local projections about population growth and projected changes for each relevant demographic group. You can draw on resources such as PANSI, NHS Digital, Census data, ONS population projections, Public Health Profiles, local joint strategic needs assessments, dynamic support register, and ASCOF and SALT datasets, and/or the Housing LIN (Learning and Improvement Network) strategic housing modelling tools (see sources of information and resources below for a selection of useful contacts).
- Local areas may have specific ways of collecting data on housing demand, consider involving relevant teams (from planners and housing strategy to public health and people with lived experience) to identify ways in which such data has been collected recently.
- Identify the number of autistic adults and adults with a learning disability in the locality and their: living support arrangements, tenure types, the number of people in different types of accommodation settings (from mainstream housing or independent living to supported housing or residential care), the number of people that are able to afford and/or are eligible for different types of housing with care and support including under NHS Continuing Healthcare (CHC), section 117 aftercare (free aftercare for some people who are leaving hospital after having been detained under the Mental health Act), and Mental Health Act. Consider data on household size and composition, and any information on people living in unsuitable/low standard homes or any restrictions such as forensic restrictions which could limit the area in which individuals are allowed to live. It is important to highlight how this data differs across age groups, gender, ethnic groups, and any other demographic groups that you think will provide valuable insight. You can also highlight differences across different localities in the area.
- Identify what is known nationally and locally about what autistic adults and adults with a learning disability value about housing, the factors that may contribute to people moving in later life and people's views on different types of housing, including housing with care and support, and the accessibility or adaptability of the property. You can draw on existing consultations and research with local people and/or national publications, guidance and good practice.



- Use current and projected populations, use projection tools and models to identify projected demand for different types of housing. This can be done by using internally developed bespoke models or other existing tools (see sources of information and resources below).
 - Consider the number of autistic young people and young people with a learning disability transitioning into adult services as well as hospital discharges.



SOURCES OF INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

- Partners in Care and Health (PCH) (2024), Developing a housing with support pipeline for people with a learning disability and autistic people – assessing need for housing with support (p.12), using strategic housing with support needs assessment (p.29).
- PANSI, <https://www.pansi.org.uk/> – national and local projections of autistic adults and adults with a learning disability population.
- NHS England digital – information on in patients who are people with learning disabilities or autistic people.
- Assuring transformation (AT) - NHS England digital – NHS inpatient data on inpatients circumstances.
- Dynamic support register and care (education) and treatment review – aims to prevent unnecessary hospital admissions for autistic adults and adults with a learning disability.
- Education health and social care plans (EHCP) – for current information on autistic young people and young people with a learning disability.
- ASCOE, SALT, ASC-FR datasets, Census 2021 data, ONS population projections, public health profiles, English housing survey, indices of multiple deprivation, housing LIN.
- Joint strategic needs assessments, joint health and wellbeing strategies, GP disabilities register, local adult social care strategy, local housing strategies for people with learning disabilities and autistic people, local plan, housing needs assessments, local planning policies and the local Strategic Housing Market Assessment.
- Any existing consultations or research with local people, anecdotal feedback from service user involvement groups, market research and nationally published reports about people's needs and preferences for housing in later life.
- The Housing LIN also curates dedicated webpages on improving the housing choice and supply of housing for autistic people and people with a learning disability.





PARTNERS TO INVOLVE

Partners for this step can both identify and agree the types of information that are needed and help identify relevant data that organisations collect but others may not be aware of. It is also important to involve partners with the necessary skills to conduct the analysis described above, whether these are local authority staff or commissioning organisations that specialise in demographic analysis.

- Local authority service managers and commissioners across adult social care, housing, data and research.
- Integrated Care Partnership, local Healthwatch, housing associations.
- Representative groups, professional networks, charities and community groups, particularly organisations representing or working with people with learning disabilities and autistic people.



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 describe the local housing needs and preferences for autistic adults and adults with a learning disability.
- I help decide what type of information about people's needs and what data should be prioritised to understand our local population.
- I help define future change in population needs and say what impact these changes will have in housing for autistic adults and adults with a learning disability.

For the partnership:

- We have conversations to hear about key information local people would like to have to better understand housing demand.
- We make the information and data accessible to individuals and facilitate their engagement in deciding priorities.
- We share information and data about population and future needs in accessible ways and involve individuals in defining projections and impact of this on housing for people with learning disabilities and autistic people.

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](#).



EXAMPLE: CHESHIRE AND MERSEYSIDE

Cheshire and Merseyside Transforming Care Partnership developed an assessment to understand the future need for supported housing over the period 2022/23 to 2032/33. This work was based on a quantitative analysis developed by Campbell Tickell and on qualitative information gathered with commissioners from all local authorities in the region with the objective to understand local trends and the nature of future need for supported housing and housing for people with learning disabilities and autistic people in their area.

The quantitative analysis included data from all nine councils in the region and focused on identifying the projected demand for supported housing for each locality by 2032/33. The analysis focused on those individuals who are inpatients or at high risk of inpatient admission and/or those who are eligible for adult social care services, including:

- Inpatients in hospital or specialist units
- Those on the Dynamic Support Databases who are high risk
- Residents in care homes
- Young people who are transitioning to adult services
- People living with a family carer.

The analysis identified the need for 1,679 supported housing units across Cheshire and Merseyside over the period 2022/23 to 2032/33. This includes the projected population of people with a disability. The report details how projections could be influenced by the number of relets and other factors such as those people in NHS hospital settings who are NHS 'Specialised Commissioning Patients'.

The partnership explored how some of the demand could be met through Shared Lives and general accommodation, identifying the need for an extra 165 Shared Lives places and 380 general housing units for the period.

Through the qualitative research, the partnership worked with commissioners to identify the local trends and the nature of the supported housing needs of people with a learning disability and autistic people. The research mapped current accommodation settings, including people living with family carers/informal carers, young people in transition to adult social care eligibility, people living in Shared Lives, residential care, nursing care, hospital settings, and shared supported housing. The research identified the needs for each of these groups to support a better understanding local trends according to each type of setting.

The evidence from the quantitative and qualitative research were then combined to support the development of a gap analysis for the period and support the development of a regional housing strategy. More details can be found in [Cheshire and Merseyside Housing Strategy: People with Learning Disabilities and/or Autism](#) (ADASS Cheshire and Merseyside).



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Step 2: Map current provision of housing

Housing for autistic adults and adults with a learning disability



Introduction

This step will support you to provide an overview of the current local housing capacity for autistic adults and adults with a learning disability across different types of housing with care and support and including general housing if that is a part of your housing strategy. This is part of understanding whether current housing meets current need and to what extent it is likely to meet future needs. This will help you to identify unmet demand.

What this step will add to your local strategy:

- A summary of current figures of housing provision for autistic adults and adults with a learning disability highlighting priority areas, types of housing offered, and unmet needs.
- Future projections of housing provision based on local market drivers, demographic projections, and local plans to expand and encourage investment in the area.



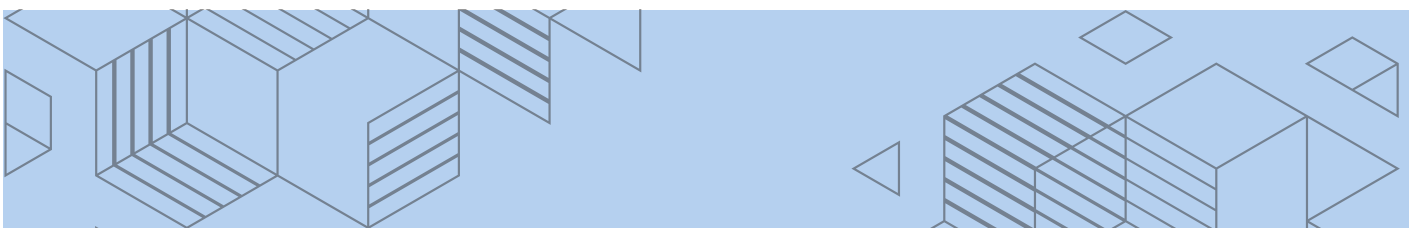
KEY QUESTIONS

- How much housing for autistic adults and adults with a learning disability is available in your local area?
 - How many units of each type of housing is available?
- How does the provision compare with the demand?
 - Is there enough housing available for autistic adults and adults with a learning disability?
 - Is there a range of both housing and tenure types and do they match people's preferences and needs?
 - What are the gaps?
- How many units of housing for autistic adults and adults with a learning disability are made available each year?
- Is the housing provision likely to be reduced, stay the same, or increase over the coming years?
 - What are the drivers for change?
 - Are there any established targets for expanding the provision?
- What are the gaps in provision?
 - What are the areas and types of housing that most need investment to increase provision?
- What has worked locally and what has not?
 - For example, which schemes are popular, and which are less so?
 - Are there private schemes with poor resale values?
 - Is there feedback available for previous developments?

How to?



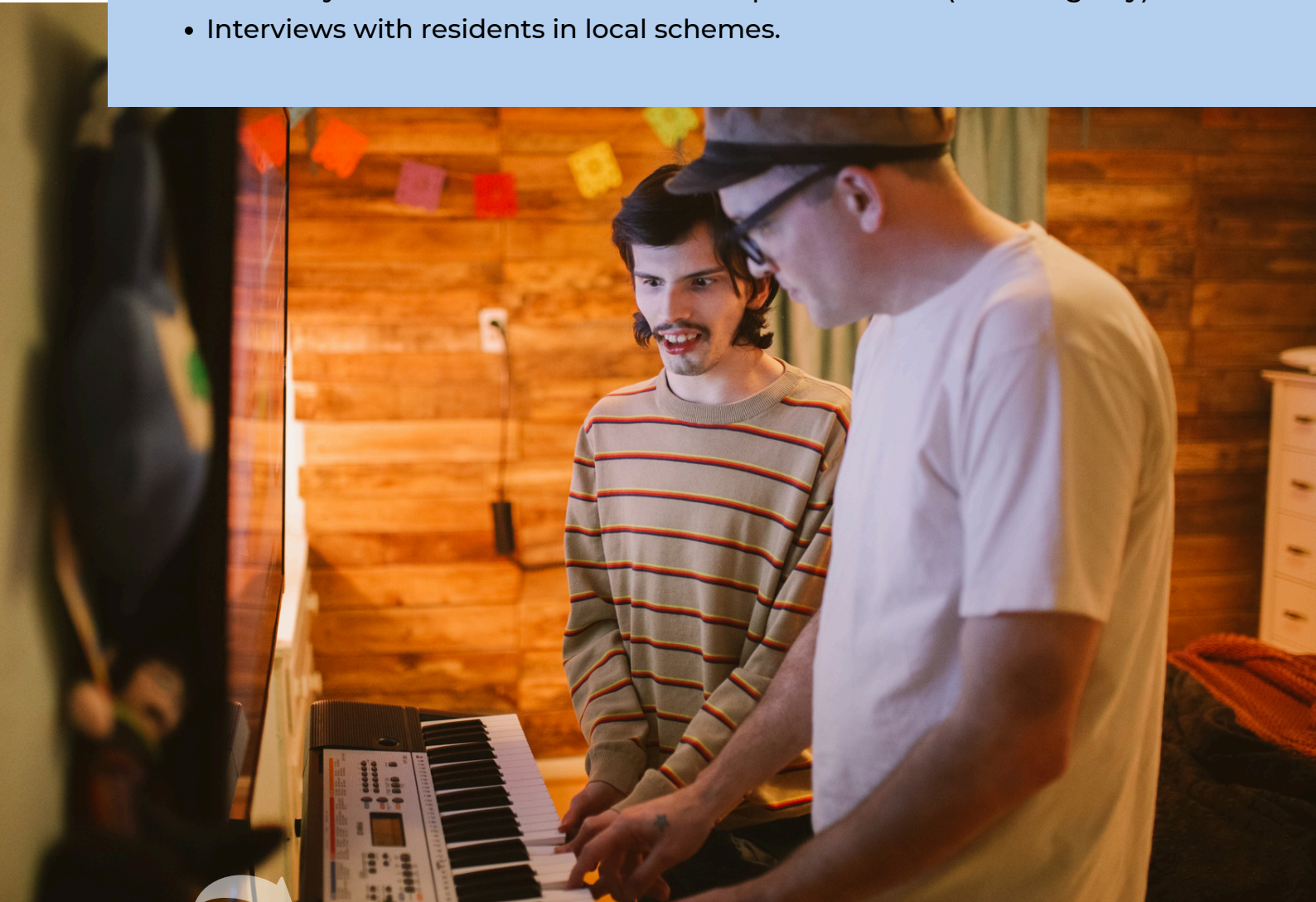
- Identify the current figures of units of housing for autistic adults and adults with a learning disability available in your locality.
 - Break it down by groups and type of housing available. See [here](#) for a short overview of housing types.
 - Where possible, identify the availability of different housing and tenure types, as well as purchase cost (if applicable) and monthly costs. This will help identify if some housing types are only available to some groups.
 - Include information on suitability and quality of current housing to understand the need for improvement and adaptation to address current and future demand.
 - Break it down by local areas and provide a geographical overview of the provision. This will help to identify geographical priorities.
- Compare the current provision with local demand ([step 1](#)) to identify any current and future gaps in provision.
 - Consider the different types of housing needed to match people's specific needs, income, affordability and eligibility for different types of housing and level of care.
 - Consider how current and future provision reflect the diversity of the local population, for example different ethnic groups, LGBTQ+ communities, and people with visual or hearing impairments.
 - Identify regions and local needs to be prioritised.
- Identify past and current trends in development, highlighting the number of units of housing made available each year.
- Estimate the likely future growth in housing provision based on recent trends in developments, those developments already in the pipeline and what is already known about the local market.
 - Include the number of young people likely to transition to adult services each year. These number may fluctuate each year so it is key to consider some flexibility in provision ([step 1](#)).
 - Consider to what extent the demand projections identified in [step 1](#) are likely to be met by the estimated future growth.
 - Include any local strategy, vision, or plans to set a target number of housing for autistic adults and adults with a learning disability to be developed in the future.
- Identify the gaps in provision and highlight key opportunities for development.
 - Highlight the types of tenures and types of housing to be prioritised based on local needs and current gaps.
 - Explore wider alternatives and consider types of housing not traditionally used in your local area to improve housing options ([step 6](#)).





SOURCES OF INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

- PANSI – national and local projections of people with learning disabilities and autistic people populations.
- Supported Accommodation Review (SAR) – estimates the scale, scope and cost of the supported housing sector in Great Britain.
- Statistical Data Return (SDR) – annual online survey completed by all private registered providers of social housing in England.
- Partners in Care and Health (PCH) (2024), Developing a housing with support pipeline for people with a learning disability and autistic people – mapping housing supply and gap analysis (pp.23-28).
- Current figures of housing provision for autistic adults and adults with a learning disability – number of units delivered over the past years. Ideally organised by housing type, builder, and operator.
- Strategic plans and policies with relevant information on plans to influence future housing provision, including target numbers to be achieved.
- Housing registers, local housing pipeline, joint strategic needs assessments, joint health and wellbeing strategies, local adult social care strategy, housing with support needs assessments, local planning policies.
- Summary of housing demand for autistic adults and adults with a learning disability (from step 1) to be compared to current and future provision, identifying areas and types of housing that most need increased provision.
- Summary of resale values in owner-occupied schemes (Land Registry).
- Interviews with residents in local schemes.





PARTNERS TO INVOLVE

It is highly likely that no single group or body will hold the range of information needed or will be able to interpret the data that is held. Working across teams and with skilled data analysts is therefore essential to make best use of existing data. While many systems work with external consultants to support mapping the current provision and understanding the gaps, they will still need to work with:

- Adult social care housing panels and extra care housing panels
- Local teams managing supported living contracts including NHS foundation trust
- Local authority staff from planning, regeneration, and licensing teams
- Strategic housing, planning, and social care policy teams
- Housing advice and homelessness
- Allocations/lettings, property services/surveyors
- Accessible housing register teams
- Specialist teams, for example, tenancy support/independent living/outreach and community services
- General and specialist housing associations.

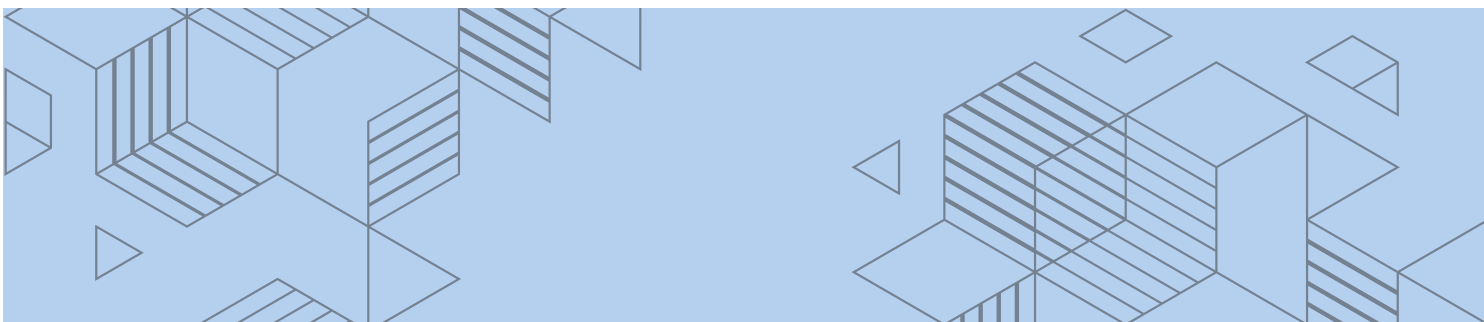


CO-PRODUCTION

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 say what is working well, what needs to be improved, and what is missing related to housing for autistic adults and adults with a learning disability.
- I help decide what is most important to understand provision of housing for autistic adults and adults with a learning disability.
- I have access to information on the current housing provision and so I can contribute to decide what the priorities are.



For the partnership:

- We have conversations with and take on board individuals' views on the state and scale of current provision of housing for autistic adults and adults with a learning disability.
- We make information accessible and available, facilitate individuals' understanding, and support them in deciding the key priorities for housing provision for autistic adults and adults with a learning disability.

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



EXAMPLE: SOUTH YORKSHIRE

The South Yorkshire Integrated Care Board (ICB) recently developed an assessment of the current supported housing offer in the region. The assessment was focused on those units to which the local authorities, or commissioned care providers, have nomination or referrals rights. Local authorities usually enter nomination and referral rights agreements with landlords and then arrange support services separately. Currently, most housing units are owned or managed by housing associations with the addition of a variety of supported living services established by the private sector.

The assessment identified the number of current supplies across all four local authorities included in the ICB, identifying current numbers, types of accommodation included, approaches to commissioning care and support services, and options available to individuals according to their level of need.

The available supply per local authority was identified as:

- Barnsley - 139 (71 per 100k of the adult population)
- Doncaster - 311 (127 per 100k of the adult population)
- Rotherham - 203 (98 per 100k of the adult population)
- Sheffield - 628 (135 per 100k of the adult population).

The assessment also identified developments currently in the pipeline across the four local authorities to map the number of housing units in development and types of housing and level of support offered by the future developments. This information will be key to identifying any current gaps in provision and support projections.

More information can be found in the [South Yorkshire 2022 market position statement - housing with support for people with learning disabilities and/or autism](#).

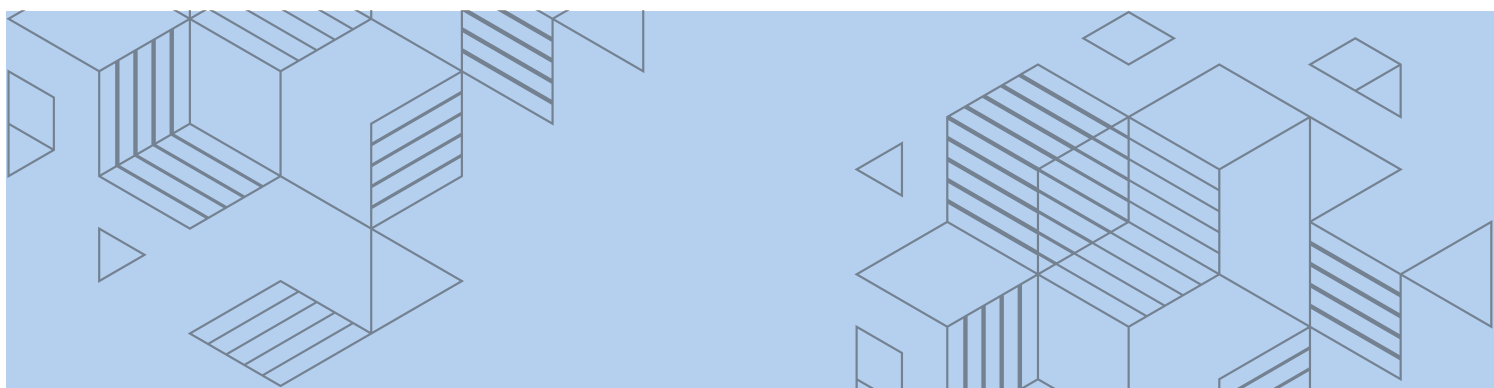
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Step 3: Understand the local market

Housing for autistic adults and adults with a learning disability



Introduction

This step will support you to understand the key factors influencing the local housing market, costs and affordability, and how these relate to housing options for autistic adults and adults with a learning disability. Having found out about what the local housing provision is (in [step 2](#)), this step helps to understand why that is, and what are the key issues impacting on the future housing pipeline. These should help any potential developers and landlords to understand how the market operates, how they would fit in that market, and identify opportunities for development.

What this step will add:

- A description of the local market for housing for autistic adults and adults with a learning disability with an overview of factors driving the local market, affordability, scope for innovation, and opportunities for investment.
- It will start to highlight some of the benefits of investing in the locality based on opportunities offered in the local market. Benefits are further explored in [step 7](#): assess costs and benefits, and [step 10](#): social value of investment.



KEY QUESTIONS

- Has your local authority created a local development plan? What are the plans for developing the local economy that could relate to housing and/or social care? Are there specific plans for housing and/or support for autistic adults and adults with a learning disability?
- What are the key economic drivers that have influenced the local housing market? Have they improved over the years, what are the positives?
 - Consider affordability (rent/purchase price, monthly management fees/service charges), population demographics ([step 1](#)), access to relevant benefits, housing prices, rent levels, access to finance, and key drivers of the local and national economy.
- What is the profile of the market, both social and private? What types of organisations and products are currently available for different housing options, current and future needs, where are the gaps ([step 2](#))? These gaps may then be priorities for development.
- What types of developers are currently operating in the locality? Are there any mechanisms for market management regarding meeting people's needs, lease costs, and making arrangements with local authorities to allocate individuals to available accommodations?



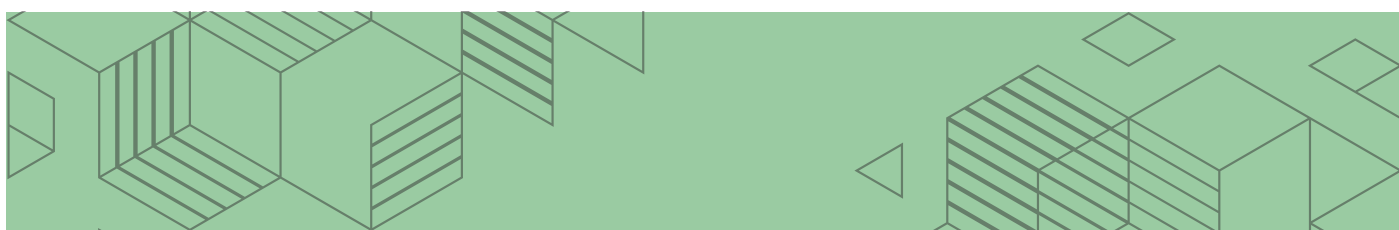
KEY QUESTIONS

- Does the local authority have a policy or offer any risk sharing agreement regarding voids and nomination? Voids are vacant (un-let) housing units. Housing nomination is where the local authority or housing authority puts forward a person or household to be considered for a property owned or managed by a registered provider.
- What is the scope for innovation and 'future proofing' new and existing development so that fewer people need to move out of their home if their health or mobility changes? Consider learning from previous experience and any feedback received.

How to?



- Highlight the advantages and support offered to developers and investors by the local authority and local partners identified in any local development plan, business plan, or housing strategy.
 - Consider support to mitigate risks of market constraints - such as land availability, lack of suitable sites of the right size, and planning policies and practices.
 - Identify key benefits to providers and developers, e.g. longevity of investment, stability of the local market, and value and demand including commissioning cycles.
- Highlight any economic growth measured in the past years. If available, present projections of growth forecasted as well as local authorities' investment plans and economy stimulus strategies relevant to the housing sector.
- Summarise key information on the local economy and housing affordability such as average house price, level of support needed, local income and access to funding, running costs, local affordability ratios, size of the market based on demographics, and income disparity across the local area including comparing rural and urban areas where relevant.
- Map the types of providers present in the area and different forms of operating, including arrangements with local authorities and the NHS. Commissioning frameworks may be a good starting point to identify active providers. Map any forms of market management in place to guide developers' activities and how this could influence the local market. For example, having shared accommodation in excess as opposed to self-contained, high lease costs, and overwhelming local support services with allocation of individuals from neighbouring localities through arrangements between developers and other local authorities.



- Identify the scope and current priorities for housing innovation to better support autistic adults and adults with a learning disability (link this with steps [1](#) and [4](#)).
 - Consider architecture and design, building materials and efficiency, facilities and functionality, support approaches, and tech enable care approaches.
- Define and provide information on the approach adopted to manage voids and nomination risks.
 - Consider ways to reduce the risks to housing providers, such as commissioners taking the lead on agreements for voids and nomination and by separating housing and care provision.



SOURCES OF INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

- Existing local documents: Strategic housing market assessment, market position statements, housing and social care local strategies.
- Commissioning frameworks – list of current providers.
- Local Government Association – [understanding the local housing markets](#).
- Office for National Statistics – [property price, private rent and household statistics](#).
- Office for National Statistics – [house price statistics for small areas in England and Wales](#).
- Cambridge Centre for Housing & Planning Research – [understanding supply, demand and investment in the market for retirement housing communities in England](#).
- DWP data on recipients of disability benefits in a local authority area.





PARTNERS TO INVOLVE

It is highly likely that no single group or body will hold the range of information needed or will be able to interpret the data that is held. Working across teams and with skilled data analysts will make best use of existing data.

- Local authority staff from commissioning, planning, and regeneration teams
- Strategic housing and social care policy teams
- Allocations/lettings, property services/surveyors
- Accessible housing register teams
- Specialist teams, for example, tenancy support/independent living/outreach and community services
- Housing associations, particularly those with housing for autistic adults and adults with a learning disability
- NHS, Integrated Care Partnerships and Better Care Fund managers.



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 say what my experience is of getting a home, and what makes that easy or hard.
- I help decide what could make it easier or harder to build more housing in the future.
- I share my experiences of local organisations that provide housing and support for autistic adults and adults with a learning disability.

For the partnership:

- We make information accessible and facilitate individuals' understanding of key local market drivers. We highlight how these factors can influence their lives, particularly their access to different types of housing.
- We have conversations and take on board individuals' views on the most significant factors that impact on their experience of accessing housing, as well as their experiences with local housing organisations.

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



EXAMPLE: CORNWALL

Cornwall recently developed its Supported and Specialist Housing Strategy 2023-2050. The strategy presents information on the benefits and opportunities for investing in the locality and provides information on key aspects to help developers and investors to understand key advantages, including:

- Outlining an approach for delivering the strategy highlighting how the council will work closely with a range of providers of supported housing.
- Highlighting plans to involve providers at an early stage in discussions around the reconfiguration or disposal of existing supported accommodation.
- Managing the supported housing and accommodation market to encourage and facilitate a wide range of supported housing options that meet the local need.
- Outlining current nomination rights agreement with registered providers and what can be expected for by new providers.
- A desire to develop a housing pathway which includes a mix of housing and supported accommodation, which offers people different housing choices, from housing options with 24-hour support, seven days a week through to access to mainstream housing with packages of care/support tailored to individuals' needs.
- The alignment of the strategy with the local health and wellbeing strategy, business plan, market position statement, housing strategy, and other relevant strategies.
- Ensuring that the Council has the necessary governance and decision-making structures in place to facilitate a unified, coordinated and holistic approach to commissioning, funding and reviewing supported housing, to ensure all residents can "[s]tart well, live well and age well".

The strategy presents a summary of market opportunities based on evidence of needs and provision. The opportunities are presented in relation to cohorts of peoples and needs, highlighting the emphasis on preventative approaches. The market opportunities presented include:

- An assumption that mainstream housing suitably designed and/or adapted will be appropriate for many people with support and/or care needs.
- Inter-generational living as a key part of housing options offered.
- Options of multi-functional schemes mixing mainstream housing, supported housing, and other facilities.
- A focus on assisting and facilitating the inclusion of people in the community.
- Use of home adaptations, digital technology, and support services to support and promote independence.

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Step 4: Identifying preferences and needs

Housing for autistic adults and adults with a learning disability



Introduction

This step will support you in conducting research into what local people want from housing for autistic adults and adults with a learning disability, including their lifestyle, care and support needs, and financial circumstances. It will help you to develop a housing strategy and plan that speaks to people's needs and preferences, increasing uptake and reducing investment risks.

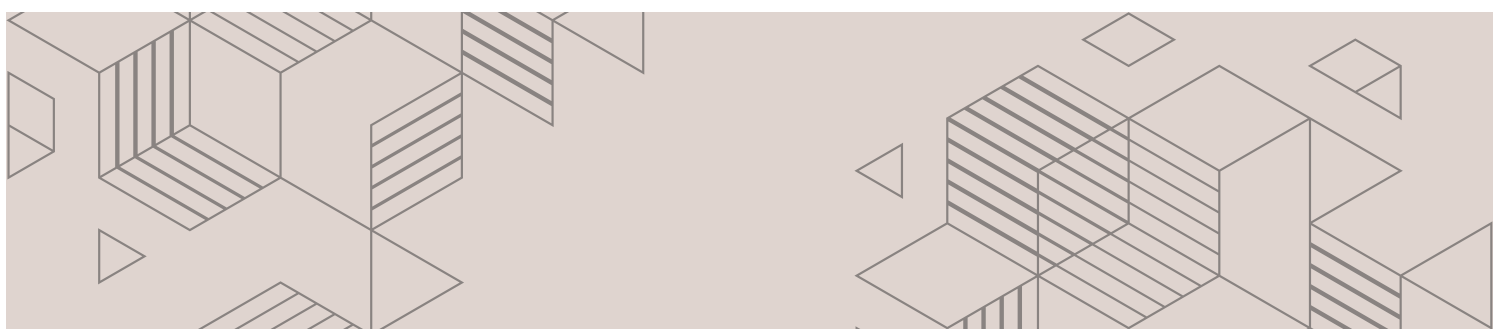
What this step will add:

- A detailed profile of people, including their circumstances and preferences around housing for autistic adults and adults with a learning disability to support you to prioritise the right mix of housing options in your locality.



KEY QUESTIONS

- What are the key demographic characteristics in your locality? (Information from [step 1](#) can support this).
- Are there any groups of autistic adults and adults with a learning disability and their family/carers (based on [groups with different types of needs](#), ethnicity, gender, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, economic background) in your locality that face challenges accessing housing services and/or other local services? Ensuring these groups are included is key to developing a plan that is fully inclusive and supports diversity.
- What is the focus of the research in your area? Consider the topics, groups, and localities to be prioritised.
- What are people's housing preferences, needs and priorities? Consider the type of property and space (number of bedrooms, any communal spaces, kitchen or outdoor space), location (transport, community, family, employment), care and support needs (direct carer support, mobility needs, sensory needs), design (accessibility, functionality and efficiency, attractive), tenure (ownership or rent), and availability of services.
- What is the research approach to be adopted, and will it be undertaken internally, or be commissioned? Consider the scale and methods to be used.



How to?



- Establish the key areas that the research needs to focus on. This may include preferences, priorities, goals and daily lives, health and social care support needed, demographic information, economic profile, geographical preferences.
- Define the groups of people to be included, using criteria such as groups with different types of needs, age and locality for example. Consider how diverse groups can be included to ensure that all local communities are represented in the data. The research should also seek to include different perspectives and voices, for example, those of the family, friends and carers of autistic adults and adults with a learning disability, where appropriate.
- Research into the housing needs and preferences of autistic adults and adults with a learning disability can be undertaken in different ways. Focus groups, one-to-one meetings and easy read questionnaires are the most common methods. It is likely that different methods will be used for different groups, based on their preferences, types of needs and specific support needed.
- Consider working in partnership with local community organisations to co-produce the research approach as this will ensure it is accessible to different groups. Autistic adults and adults with a learning disability are more likely to participate in research if approached by people and organisations they trust.
- In many cases, local authorities and local partnerships opt to commission an independent organisation to undertake the research. While this can be beneficial in terms of expertise and impartiality of the results, smaller scale research can be conducted internally and may offer other advantages. Either way, it is important to define an approach and a plan of action.
- Topics to be explored in the research may include:
 - Current housing and lifestyle – who people live with now, where they live, type of housing/accommodation, number of rooms, shared spaces, outside areas, how they like to spend their time.
 - Housing and community preferences, needs and priorities – what people value about where they live, whether they would like to share a home and if so with whom, the type of property and space (number of bedrooms, any communal spaces, kitchen or outdoor space), the type of local area they would like to live in. What transport links, infrastructure and opportunities for socialisation, employment and proximity to their families they need. What current and future hobbies and activities they aspire to. Helping people prioritise their needs and preferences is also an important part of understanding what factors are most important and how this can vary across different groups.
 - Health and social care needs and support – including types of support they access and if their current housing meets their needs – includes any care and support staff, background cover, mobility needs, sensory needs, behaviour that challenges, assistive technology.



- Housing tenure preference and economic circumstances – whether they would prefer to rent a place, buy their own home, or shared ownership. Consider affordability, access to finance, funding and benefits to rent or buy a home.
- Moving intention and home improvements – any desire or plans to move and why, with any associated timelines or any adaptations planned or needed to improve accessibility, mobility and independence.
- Understanding people's views on different housing options. Many people are unlikely to be aware of the range of housing options and the differences between them and so will need comprehensive, clear and accessible information about this. This information should be available in easy read format, and in paper and online versions. This could include eligibility and suitability of different housing types, tenure, the benefits for each of the housing types, as well as common concerns.
- Work with community groups on topics for specific groups. For example, there may be some additional or different topics to discuss with LGBTQ+ and older people, and these questions can be designed with those groups.
- Consider how the information collected will be processed and presented in the housing strategy. Look for highlights and trends that represents people's needs and preferences and give potential providers and developers an overview of the local tendency on housing for autistic adults and adults with a learning disability.
- Research needs to be designed, analysed and interpreted in the context of the local housing market and the different groups being consulted. More specifically, it is important to be aware that people in different age groups and with different levels of need are likely to have different views on different types of housing for autistic adults and adults with a learning disability, based on their current preferences and this may not accurately reflect future demand.
- Consider how you will feed back the findings from the research to the participants and highlight how the information gathered is going to be used.





SOURCES OF INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

- Neurodiversity in planning: engagement toolkit – toolkit on engaging with neurodiverse people.
- Where I want to live toolkit – an online toolkit to help autistic adults and adults with a learning disability think about their housing needs and preferences.
- Finding our own way home: A ‘big’ conversation on YouTube – a YouTube video that highlights two adults with a learning disability and their personal experience of accessing housing and the factors that influence their decisions.
- What help do people with learning disabilities need as they get older? – summary of a research project.
- Housing for people with learning disabilities: Renting your own place – summary of a research project.
- Finding a place to live: help with your place – guide to help with planning and finding housing and support for people with a learning disability.
- Learning Disability England, Housing guide – on rights, options and resources that can help secure the right housing for someone with a learning disability.
- SCIE (2018), Big plans: A guide for meaningfully engaging people with learning disabilities in the development of their plans.
- Torbay Council, The big plan - supporting people with learning disabilities and autism who live in Devon.
- Council for Disabled Children, No Place Like Home: A Housing and Support booklet to help people with Learning Disabilities find a housing choice right for them.
- Local Government Association, Developing customer insight.



PARTNERS TO INVOLVE

- Local autistic adults and adults with a learning disability, carers, user-led groups, charities and community groups
- Local authority community engagement and participation teams, customer insight teams, and allocations/lettings, property services/surveyors
- Local authority leaders focussed on social care, housing and autistic adults and adults with a learning disability
- General and specialist housing associations and social care providers
- Integrated Care Partnerships, community health, occupational therapists and mental health leads.



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 help decide the research topic.
- I help to help to word the questions, so they are easy to understand.
- I assist in choosing research activities that will support people to get involved.
- I say what groups of people need to be included and how activities can be made inclusive and accessible.

For the partnership:

- We facilitate individuals' understanding of the research process and take on board their views on the key areas to be covered.
- We design the methodology and the questions with individuals taking into consideration their views on what should be prioritised with different groups.
- We develop an inclusive approach based on individuals' views on who should be included and how.

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



EXAMPLE: THE 200 LIVES PROJECT

The 200 Lives project is a research project funded by the National Institute for Health Research and led by the Manchester Metropolitan University in partnership with National Development Team for Inclusion, London School of Economics and Changing Our Lives. The research aimed to provide up-to-date evidence of people's experiences and quality of life in supported living and residential care as well as analysis of the costs of the two different types of housing. The research included engaging with 100 people in supported living and residential care as well as 24 family members. Research methods included:



- **Participant interviews:** Interviews were generally conducted via semi-structured interview over video call, phone or face-to-face during a home visit. Participants could have a support person, such as a support worker or family member, with them if they wished. Topics included participants' views on their home, the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, transport, support needs, money, employment, how they spend their time, social life, safety and health. The research team attended a self-advocacy conference to obtain feedback on a draft version of the interview schedule and consulted 39 people with a learning disability on the wording and choice of questions.
- **Family carer questionnaires:** The survey was comprised of closed and open-ended questions, in order to gather family carers' perspectives on the overall quality of provision, the extent of their own involvement, aspects of the service they valued and aspects they would like to be changed.

Some of the key findings that related to what people and their families value about their home included:

- **Claiming space:** People particularly valued the ability to make the space their own, for example being able to decorate and having space outside of their bedroom that was 'theirs'.
- **Day-to-day autonomy:** Valued being in charge of their day-to-day life and being able to choose what they did and when they did it, which gave people a sense of freedom.
- **Location:** The location of the home was important, particularly to people in supported living. People valued living close to people they know and having easy access to local facilities. This helped to give people a sense of community and independence.
- **People:** The people they lived with played a big role in whether someone liked their home or not. For many people, the company of their housemates and staff was one of their favourite things about where they lived. However, it could be difficult when housemates or staff moved on. When people had problems with their housemates or staff, this had a big effect on how they felt about their home. Equally, some people may prefer to live alone or with a partner.
- **Families:** Family members valued properties that were a good size, well-kept and homely, in safe locations with easy access to local facilities. It was important to many that their relative stayed living locally to them. Relationships with housemates and staff were also important, as well as opportunities that the housing set-up provided their relative to live the life they wanted.
- **Based on the findings, the report outlines a number of recommendations for commissioners, service providers, housing providers, regulators and policymakers to improve to improve spaces, support and services for people in supported living and residential care. Please see the [full report](#) and [easy read summary](#) for more information.**



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Step 5: Understand the commissioning landscape

Housing for autistic adults and adults with a learning disability



Introduction

This step is about everyone involved in a local housing partnership understanding how, and in what way, the housing strategy for autistic adults and adults with a learning disability fits with the commissioning of NHS services by Integrated Care Boards (ICBs) and adult social care services by local authorities. It is likely that health commissioners from ICBs will only be involved in commissioning for those autistic adults and adults with a learning disability with high needs, and adult social care commissioners will be responsible for commissioning for those with high or moderate, and moderate or low needs.

It involves working with health and adult social care commissioners to understand the current commissioning landscape, including what is currently commissioned, and future commissioning priorities, with respect to housing for autistic adults and adults with a learning disability. It also involves working with potential providers 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

housing strategy, those involved in developing a housing plan may not have a good understanding of commissioning. It will help with conversations and planning if everyone has some understanding of the local commissioning systems and priorities.

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

This is important to your housing strategy because health and adult social care commissioning is one part of the longer-term financial stability of housing provision for autistic adults and adults with a learning disability. Providers and developers need to be reassured that the housing strategy doesn't sit in isolation from the wider commissioning landscape.

How to?



Talk to commissioners of health and adult social care to understand:

- The statutory duties of ICBs in the planning, funding and commissioning of NHS services as set out in the Health and Care Act 2022, for example commissioning for Continuing Healthcare (CHC) as well as NHS funded aftercare under section 117 of the Mental Health Act. Equally important is understanding the role of Integrated Care Partnerships - statutory committees that bring together a broad set of system partners to develop a health and care strategy for the area.
- 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 health and 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 health and adult social care services and any projections of demand for different types of services.
- The aims and priorities for health and adult social care, in particular any commitments to developing/expanding different types of housing options and timescales associated with these priorities.
- Sense checking [steps 1-4](#) and discussing how the housing strategy can support the work of commissioners.

Talk to potential providers and developers to understand:

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



SOURCES OF INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

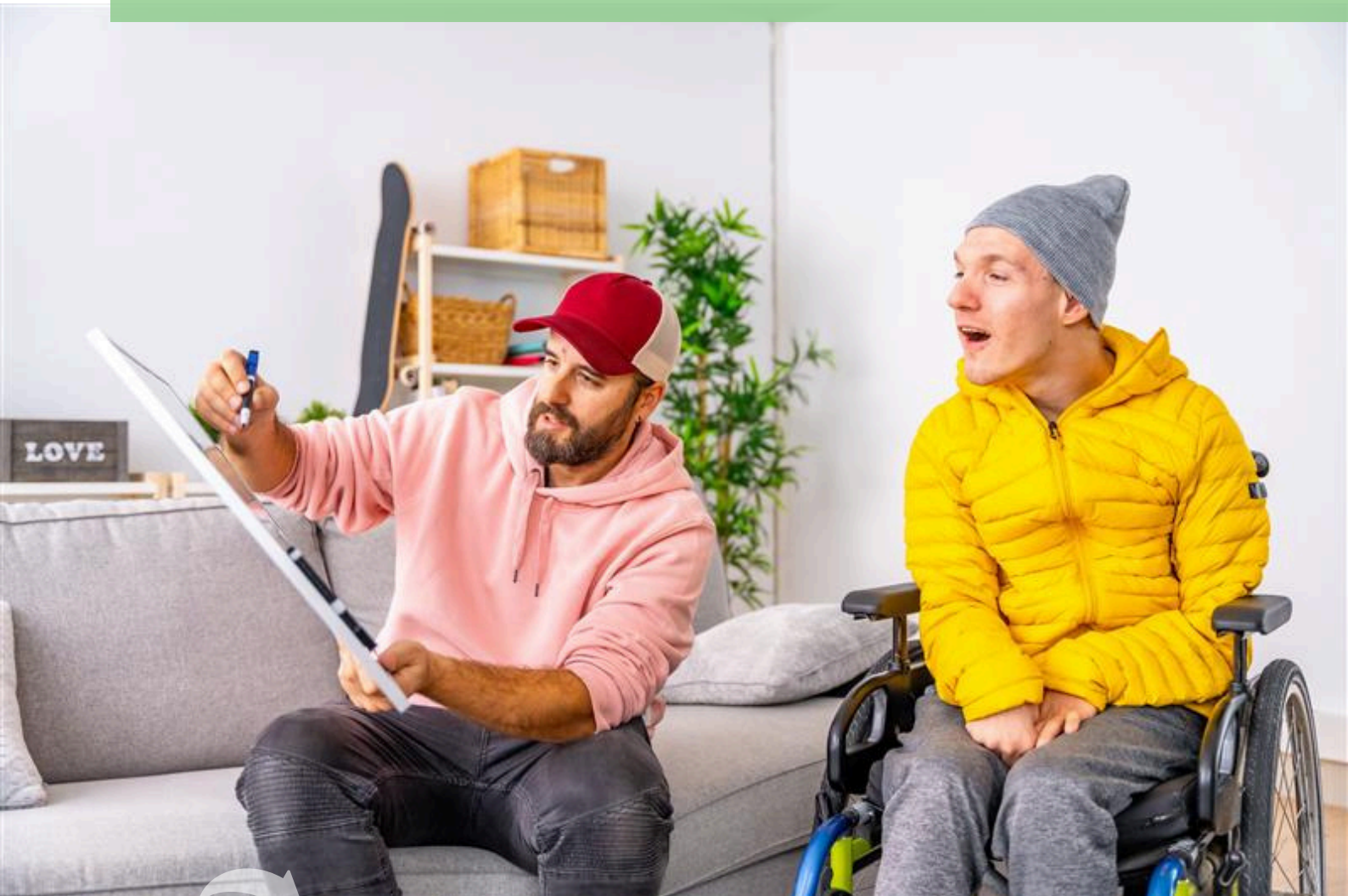


- Kings Fund, [What is commissioning and how is it changing?](#)
- Kings Fund, [Social care in a nutshell.](#)
- NHS England, [What are integrated care systems?](#)
- Kings Fund, [Integrated care systems explained.](#)
- Rethink Mental Illness, [Section 117 aftercare - Under the Mental Health Act 1983.](#)
- SCIE, [Joint commissioning for integrated care.](#)
- Access group, [Commissioning cycle in social care.](#)
- NHS England, [NHS continuing healthcare.](#)
- [Health and Care Act 2022: Integrated Care Boards - functions.](#)
- [The Care Act 2014: Responsibilities of local authorities.](#)
- SCIE, [Care act, assessment and eligibility.](#)

PARTNERS TO INVOLVE



- Health and adult social care commissioners, ICB, investors, providers and developers.





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 am supported to understand what commissioning is and how local organisations work with the local authority to provide housing and support.
- I help to describe local commissioning and how it affects housing options and access to support so that others can understand it too.

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, ensuring that information is provided in a range of accessible formats.
- We have conversations, providing any support needed, 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](#).



INSIGHT: THE KING'S FUND – CHANGES TO THE HEALTH AND ADULT SOCIAL CARE COMMISSIONING LANDSCAPE

The King's Fund have published [commentary on changes to the health and adult social care commissioning landscape](#), including the structure of the commissioning system after July 2022, when ICBs become the statutory commissioners of the majority of NHS care.

"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."

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Step 6: Drawing on best practice

Housing for autistic adults and adults with a learning disability



Introduction

This step is about ensuring that your housing strategy and plan demonstrates a commitment to drawing on best practice such as:

- Published guidance, standards, benchmarks and examples relating to best practice in the development of housing options for autistic adults and adults with a learning disability, particularly that which is relevant to your local area.
- Housing strategies developed by other local areas through discussions with developers, health and adult social care commissioners and/or Integrated Care Boards (ICBs), growth or investment teams (e.g., Homes England, the Greater London Authority, the NHS and/or other funders), local community groups and planners elsewhere.

This step will improve the quality of your housing strategy by widening the lens beyond your own local authority to identify and learn from what is already working well in other areas and detect any gaps in your own strategy or process that need to be addressed. It will also help develop more detailed and technical specifications, based on best practice, for the capital and/or revenue investment opportunities identified in your housing strategy. This in turn will ensure developers, providers and investors have more clarity about expectations in terms of housing supply, high-quality design and service delivery that meets the need of autistic adults and adults with a learning disability.



KEY QUESTIONS

You will need to consult published research, guides and data and talk to other commissioners to understand:

Development standards and guides

- What does the evidence base say about best practice, innovation and the experiences of autistic adults and adults with a learning disability in the development, repurposing or adaptation of different types of housing options?

Inclusive design

- What does the evidence base say about best practice, relevant development standards, construction materials and technology, innovation and the experiences of autistic adults and adults with a learning disability in the design quality of new or adapted housing, with a particular focus on equality, diversity and inclusion?

Peer review

- How have other local areas with similar local profiles developed and delivered their housing strategy? (This could also be a Local Plan or other housing-related report such as a Strategic Housing Market Assessment).
- Learning from how local areas whose housing strategies are recognised as representing good practice, and have been deployed?

How to?



Accommodation choices

- Consult published research and guidance on best practice in the development or adaptation of the different types of housing options for autistic adults and adults with a learning disability. There are a number of guidelines and standards you should consult, depending on the type of housing, the types of needs of autistic adults and adults with a learning disability, and the level of investment you would like included in your housing strategy. Ensuring that new developments meet the required design standards can help minimise the risk of empty or unusable units. It also ensures that they can be retrofitted to meet more people's needs, thereby 'future proofing' such developments and building homes for life.
- In developing specifications for investment opportunities, it is also important to consider developments that have successfully used such guidance. Sources include: Housing LIN resources for improving housing choice and supply and design and technology enabled housing practice examples and case studies.

Inclusive design

- Consult published guidance on best practice and innovation in the development of housing options for specific groups, considering equality, diversity and inclusion:
 - Older people and people living with dementia
 - LGBTQ+ groups
 - People from ethnic minority backgrounds
 - People with physical, visual or hearing impairments.
- Again, in developing your specifications for investment opportunities, it is also important you consider developments that have successfully used such guidance. Sources include: The Housing LIN curates a selection of dedicated pages with relevant tools, resources and case studies.

Peer review

- Speak with commissioners from other local authorities with similar local profiles, for example, similar socioeconomic and demographic profiles, similar spread across groups with different types of needs, or similar housing challenges, to understand:
 - The housing and supply solutions they have explored
 - The challenges they have encountered and how these have been addressed
 - How they have made decisions about the capital and/or revenue investment opportunities included in their housing strategy



- Any innovative examples of new purpose-built housing developments, advances in construction materials and technology or adapting or repurposing existing housing
- The relationships they have built with the sector, including funders and developers and how they engaged with communities to co-design/co-produce solutions
- Speak with commissioners whose housing strategies have been recognised as representing good practice to understand:
 - How they developed and delivered their plan?
 - What did the process involve? Including any challenges encountered, and how these were addressed.
 - How have they assessed demand and supply? How have they made projections? How have they conducted cost benefit analyses/measured social impact?
 - How did they consider the information needs of different audiences?
 - How have they tendered/procured care and support?



SOURCES OF INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

- Gov UK, (2020) [Supported housing: national statement of expectations.](#)
- Gov UK, (2023) [Guide to the supported accommodation regulations including quality standards.](#)
- Local Government Association, (2020) [Specialised supported housing: guidance for local government and NHS commissioners.](#)
- Gov UK, (2024) [Social housing providers: Regulation and standards.](#)
- Transforming Care Programme, (2016) [Building the right home: Guidance for commissioners of health and care services for children, young people and adults with learning disabilities and/or autism who display behaviour that challenges.](#)
- [A practical guide to the Reach standards](#) – Reach standards are a set of voluntary standards that introduce the fundamental principles of support for living.
- Habinteg, (2024) [The inclusive housing design guide.](#)
- Local Government Association, [Considering and meeting the sensory needs of autistic people in housing: Supporting autistic people to flourish at home and beyond.](#)
- Housing LIN, (2022) [Design for the mind: Neurodiversity and the built environment – guide.](#)
- Housing LIN, (2020) [Design Guidelines for inclusive, enabling environments for adults with complex needs.](#)
- Care Quality Commission, (2022) [Right support, right care, right culture.](#)
- [HAPPI design principles](#) – from the Housing our Ageing Population Panel for Innovation.



PARTNERS TO INVOLVE

- Local authority staff focussed on social care, housing, autistic adults and adults with a learning disability, planning, public health, occupational therapy, Disabled Facilities Grants teams, regeneration, estates and finance.
- Autistic adults and adults with a learning disability, carers, representative groups, charities and community groups.
- Commissioners from other local authorities who have developed local housing business plans for autistic adults and adults with a learning disability.
- NHS, ICBs, Health and Wellbeing Boards and commissioners of health and social care.



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 have the opportunity to learn about good examples of different types of housing options, housing design and support offered.
- I say what is important about the quality and characteristics of housing options that best suit my needs.
- I help decide which examples of housing developments should be considered best practice, based on my needs.

For the partnership:

- We facilitate individuals' understanding of standards, guidelines and best practice with respect to different types of housing options, broadly and with respect to specific groups, ensuring that information is provided in a range of accessible formats.
- We take on board individuals' decisions and use the chosen best practice examples to shape the business case.

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](#).



EXAMPLE: RICHMOND AND WANDSWORTH – SUPPORTED HOUSING ACCOMMODATION SPECIFICATIONS

Richmond and Wandsworth council have set out detailed expectations and requirements for all types of supported housing developments. The specification is written to recognise that disabled and older people who move into supported housing may have a range of different support needs including but not limited to, physical, sensory, and cognitive impairment and may be more likely to experience sensory overwhelm. Good design, therefore, can make people's day-to-day lives easier, reduce the need for care and support, and improve health, wellbeing and quality of life. The specification was produced in conjunction with a Specialist Housing Occupational Therapist based in the Enablement and Development Team in the Housing and Regeneration Department, along with the Adult Social Care (ASC) Commissioning. The document outlines:

- General design principles – site location, wheelchair accessible flats included, adjustments for ageing, minimum size, fire safety.
- Specific design principles for access, outdoor and communal areas – pedestrian access, accessible communal spaces, quiet and active garden areas, welcoming front entrance, ground surface textures easy to negotiate, indoor planting, notifications, timetables, way finding and signage, additional seating, clearly visible lifts.
- Specific design principles for individual flats, kitchens and bathrooms – front door locking mechanism, en-suite bathrooms from bedroom and hallway, reinforced ceilings, vinyl/laminate flooring, wet rooms, power-assisted windows, waist height oven, ceramic or inductions hobs, sliding door bathrooms, level access showers.
- Sensory design principles: lighting, soundproofing, touch and control of odours.

Access [Richmond and Wandsworth's full design specification](#) for more information.

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Step 7: Assess costs and benefits

Housing for autistic adults and adults with a learning disability



Introduction

This step will support you to identify and compare cost and benefits for different types of housing for autistic adults and adults with a learning disability, considering different levels of care needed and funding arrangements. This step is intended to give an overview of key cost-benefit information that relates to your local area, and different housing options, rather than a detailed set of costs or 'return on investment' that would be undertaken for a specific build. What this step will add to your housing strategy:

- It will provide indicative costs and benefits for different types of housing for autistic adults and adults with a learning disability to help potential developers, landlords, the local authority, and other local stakeholders to better assess the economic benefits and make an informed decision.
- It will provide an overview of benefits to individuals and families, social care provision, the NHS, the wider housing market and local areas.



KEY QUESTIONS

- What is the ongoing cost of care supported in each housing option being compared?
 - What are the levels of care needs covered by each type of housing and associated costs? Consider all ongoing costs.
 - Will care be provided by private or not for profit partners?
 - What are the care provision arrangements? On-site or visiting staff?
- What are the land costs, building and refurbishing costs, and running costs including staff, repairs and maintenance, energy, equipment, and cleaning as well as borrowing costs to be paid back through rent, per unit for each type of housing?
 - Consider identifying models that are flexible to attend a range of needs and can be replicated.
- What are the key considerations relating to the costs of different housing options for different groups, i.e. self-funders, the local authority, central Government investors and providers?
- What are the potential benefits, e.g. for social care provision, the NHS, individuals and family carers, the wider housing market and local areas.
- What are the potential risks to investors, local and national, and how can these be mitigated?

How to?



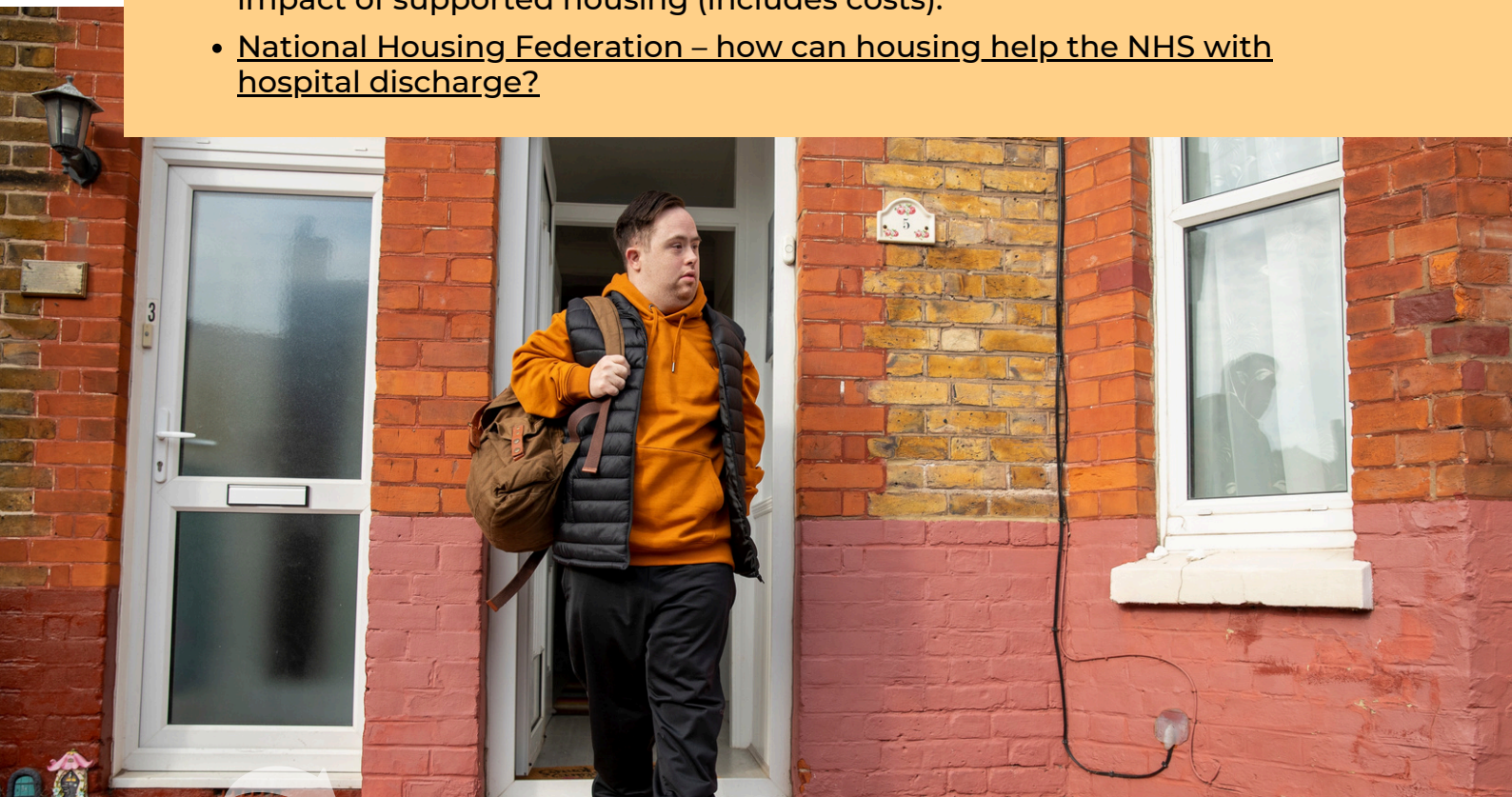
- Start by identifying the levels of care and support provided by each housing option and the average ongoing costs of care and support for the different groups in each setting.
- Consider the people that live in your area and any gaps in provision (identified in steps 1-4) as well as the mix of self-funders, full and partially funded, Continuing Healthcare (CHC), Care Act eligible, etc. This will help to identify costs and benefits of addressing those gaps as well as identifying how some costs would be met.
- Identify costs related to land, building, refurbishments, adaptations, and borrowing costs as well as the running costs for each type of housing.
 - Consider the split cost for individuals, city council, and government.
 - Relate these costs to information on the local market (step 3) including house prices.
- Identify the potential benefits of housing for autistic adults and adults with a learning disability to individuals and their families, the NHS, and social care systems. You can consult the data sources listed below for national averages if local data is not available.
 - Consider design and quality of developments and how these may influence costs, e.g. reducing the chances of crisis hospital visits.
 - Consider how costs are offset in different funding scenarios, e.g. more public capital grant means lower rents and therefore lower housing benefit costs.
 - While costs and benefits are considered across all areas of spend, it is important to recognise that costs and benefits will fall in different places and not evenly. The housing partnership can take advantage of having an overall view of the process identify these differences and highlight the benefits across areas.
 - Wider benefits to the local area can be further considered within social value of investment (step 10).





SOURCES OF INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

- Supported housing for people with learning disabilities and autistic people in England – includes an analysis of running costs of supported housing.
- Funding supported accommodation for all – specialised supported housing for people with a learning disability – includes costs of specialised housing.
- PSSRU, (2016) Unit costs of health and social care 2016.
- Housing LIN, (2019) Identifying the health care system benefits of housing with care.
- Cost model: extra care housing – although this example is specific on extra care housing, it provides relevant insights on cost and benefit analysis for other types of housing with care and support.
- Cost benefit analysis methodology – an example from Northern Ireland with insights on key aspects of the methodology.
- Cost comparison between different types of specialist housing in England (pp.10-17).
- Habinteg, (2023) Living not existing: The economic and social value of wheelchair user homes.
- Supported housing in England: Estimating need and costs to 2040 – national need and costs of supported housing.
- Local Government Association, (2024) Developing a housing with support pipeline for people with a learning disability and autistic people.
- Local Government Association, Housing for people with a learning disability or autistic people.
- Gov UK, (2023) Supported housing review 2023.
- National Housing Federation – research into the supported housing sector's impact on homelessness prevention, health and wellbeing – impact of supported housing (includes costs).
- National Housing Federation – how can housing help the NHS with hospital discharge?





PARTNERS TO INVOLVE

To gain access to this information, it is key that you work in partnership with relevant organisations and agencies. Below are some examples of some key partners to be considered and their areas of expertise.

- Strategic housing and social care policy teams
- Planning and development teams
- Specialist housing associations
- Health and social care senior management (providers and commissioners)
- Director of Finance
- Corporate resourcing team
- NHS, Integrated Care Partnerships and Better Care Fund managers



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 the costs of each type of housing, and what options autistic people, people with a learning disability and carers have to pay for some of the costs.
- I understand the benefits of each type of housing and how they can affect my life and the wider health, social care and housing markets.
- I help decide what is important about cost and benefit that should be prioritised in the housing strategy.

For the partnership:

- We make relevant information on costs and benefits accessible to individuals and facilitate their understanding through practical examples.
- We support individuals to identify the most important cost and benefit factors to be prioritised in the housing strategy.

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](#).



EXAMPLE OF BENEFIT: GLOUCESTERSHIRE INTEGRATED CARE BOARD (ICB) – SUPPORTED HOUSING SCHEMES

Gloucestershire ICB commissioners found that a lack of suitable supported housing was resulting in unnecessary admission and delays to discharge for autistic adults and adults with a learning disability. They commissioned registered housing providers to develop supported housing schemes in the area for those people who are ready to be discharged. These schemes are 100% NHS England capital grant funded, which the ICB feel is key to getting housing associations on board. Compared to using private finance, grant funding also keeps ongoing housing costs, usually covered by housing benefit, to a minimum. Gloucestershire ICB also aim to ensure that the accommodation and social care provision are commissioned separately. By separating the housing from the care provider, they reduce the risk of the person losing their home if the care placement breaks down.

Although the homes often have a significant upfront cost, the savings far outweigh the costs, with the upfront development costs paid back sometimes within a few years. Along with these savings are even bigger impacts for the individuals themselves. For example:

- The cost of adapting a home for one individual was around £451k, entirely grant funded through NHSE capital grant, the ICB and a small amount from the local authority through the Disabled Facilities Grant. The process of searching for and adapting their new home took over two years. However, this home will save £207k across health, social care and housing benefit spend each year. This individual, who had spent over three years of their young life in a highly restrictive Assessment and Treatment Unit (ATU), despite having no need for treatment, can properly start their adult life with support around them to develop skills for independent living.
- Another person had been in hospital, in an ATU in a different county, for 20 years. Their treatment was costing around £434k per year. They were discharged into specialist supported accommodation which costs the ICB and Department for Work and Pensions (DWP), through housing benefit, almost half of that - £253k a year. Therefore, this is a saving of £181k per year across the system. For the person, the move provided new opportunities, including getting a pet and having their family over for dinner, the first time they have been able to eat together since they were admitted to hospital.

More information about these schemes can be found in '[Finding a safe home after hospital: Case study research on supported housing and healthcare partnerships](#)'.



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Step 8: Reviewing findings with stakeholders

Housing for autistic adults and adults with a learning disability



Introduction

This step is about engaging with wider system stakeholders who are not represented on the housing partnership and who may or may not have been involved during previous steps. The purpose of this engagement is to share what you have found and developed so far in the previous steps and to gather feedback, address concerns and build buy-in. This will help reassure potential investors that your strategy has wider backing of all system partners.



KEY QUESTIONS

- Which partners and/or stakeholders do you need to engage with?
- What is the purpose of this engagement and how will this be achieved?
- What format or style of engagement is most appropriate; is this the same for all stakeholders or is a range of approaches useful?
- Which of the findings from steps 1-7 most resonate with stakeholders?
- Have the stakeholders identified any omissions or barriers you have not foreseen?

How to?

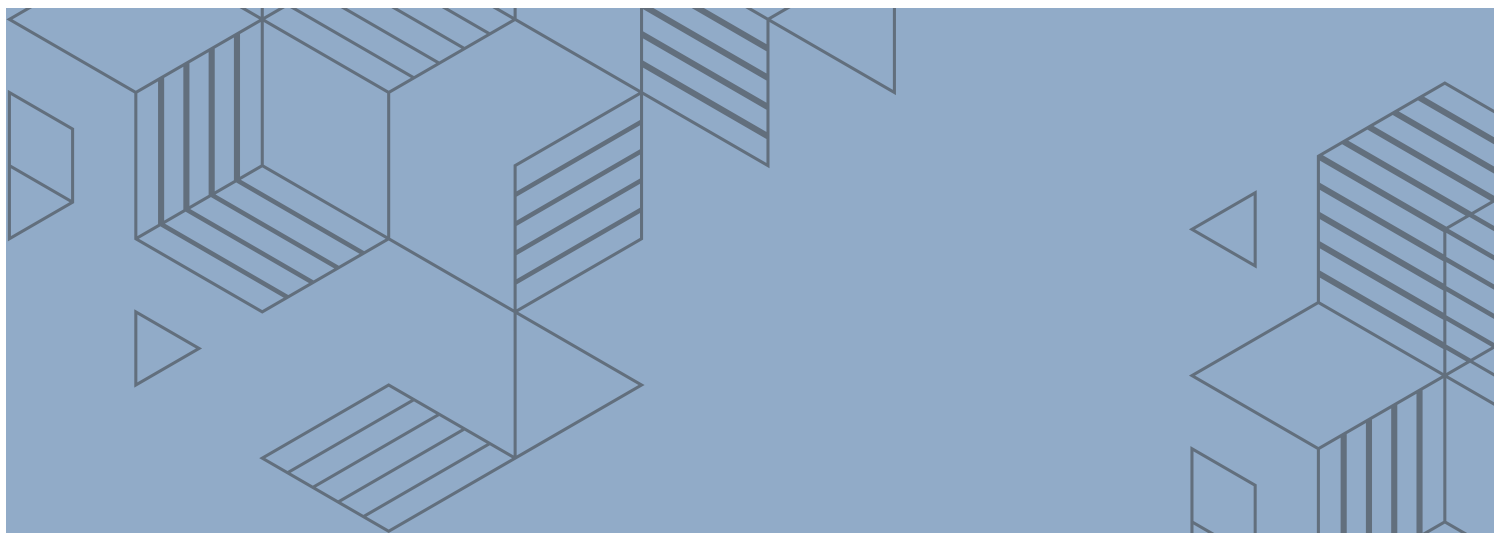


- The purpose of engaging wider stakeholders should be to share the information gathered, ideas generated and the tentative proposals for your strategy that has been produced through steps 1-7. More specifically, you should:
 - Share which aspects of the process and information gathered to date has been the most rewarding, interesting or surprising.
 - Sense-check the material with stakeholders – do the findings resonate? Are there any glaring omissions? Any challenges or barriers you have not foreseen?
 - Address any concerns raised by stakeholders – this will help foster a sense of ownership, buy-in and being part of the journey of the development of the business case.

How to?



- You will need to consider the format of engagement that is most appropriate and convenient for different stakeholders and develop content for that format. This can include:
 - Communication over email – can be used to communicate to several stakeholders simultaneously, content of emails can be personalised and provides an ‘audit trail’ of communication.
 - Surveys – online or email surveys can be a good method for involving a large number of people relatively quickly in a decision or set of options, however, it should usually be combined with virtual or face-to-face engagement with room for discussion.
 - Virtual or face-to-face engagement – adds a personal dimension, enables discussion and fosters buy-in.
 - Deliberative events – deliberation is an approach to decision-making that allows participants to consider relevant information from multiple points of view. Deliberative events enable participants to discuss the issues and options and to develop their thinking together before coming to a view, taking into account the values that inform people’s opinions. If a housing with care plan has several options, e.g. this might involve giving the participants the pros and cons of each option before asking them to choose which one they prefer.
 - Ensuring all communications are accessible, for example using easy read documents and presentations.
 - Ensuring all events are accessible in relation to the venue and content.
- Collate and analyse or write-up the feedback and information from reviewing the findings with the stakeholders. Where appropriate, use this to add to your strategy or to identify gaps that could be filled.
- Reflect on the activities with stakeholders and if this approach worked well. You could gather more formal feedback data and/or consider if your aims were met.
- Finally, consider how engagement and communication with wider stakeholders will be sustained, feedback will be integrated, and any concerns raised will be addressed.





STAKEHOLDERS TO INVOLVE

- The wider system stakeholders that you decide to engage with will depend in part on your local area and the nature of your strategy. However, they could include representatives from:
 - Autistic adults and adults with a learning disability, family carers, representative groups, charities, user-led and community groups
 - Senior local authority leaders and executives focussed on housing, social care, autistic adults and adults with a learning disability
 - Local authority social services, occupational therapists, social workers, community workers and older adults teams
 - Local authority housing and planning departments, housing benefits lead, Disabled Facilities Grant lead, as well as finance/corporate resources that relate to housing and/or autistic adults and adults with a learning disability
 - Senior NHS Leaders, including those focussed on autistic adults and adults with a learning disability
 - Local authority and NHS commissioners (covering all ages, including mental health, specialist learning disability and autism commissioners)
 - NHS discharge teams, community health and occupational therapists and multi-agency teams
 - Integrated Care Partnerships and Integrated Care Boards (for information on these see [here](#)), NHS provider collaboratives (for information on these see [here](#))
 - Elected members: County, borough parish or town councillors
 - Builders, planners and architects
 - Social care providers
 - Registered and unregistered social housing providers
 - Property developers and property investors.





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 help to build a list of people and organisations that should be involved in this step.
- I help decide how these conversations will happen and what format is best for each group of people or organisations.
- I speak with people and organisations taking part to make them aware of my views on housing for autistic adults and adults with a learning disability and how this is addressed by the strategy.

For the partnership:

- We support individuals to identify stakeholders and plan the format and delivery of engagement with different stakeholder groups.
- We plan and make sure individuals have the opportunity to talk to stakeholders about their views on housing for autistic adults and adults with a learning disability and how the strategy will match their views.

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](#).



PLANNING WITH PEOPLE WHO USE AND DELIVER SERVICES: SHARED LIVES PLUS

[Shared Lives Plus](#) is the UK membership charity supporting the shared living sector which comprises of Shared Lives and Homeshare. Ewan King, Chief Executive of Shared Lives Plus summarises below the importance of planning public services with people with lived experience.

“In many public service settings, plans and initiatives, often with far-reaching consequences, are developed with little or no involvement from local people and other organisations working in the sector. This is not only morally wrong, in my view, it is likely that by not involving wider groups, you miss out on some of the best insights, ideas and viewpoints about how a service could be better designed and delivered. That is why in developing a new service or way of delivering a public good, you need to engage all groups that are involved either in drawing on or delivering support throughout the process, checking back with them as often as you can on the plans as they emerge.”

Ewan King, Chief Executive, Shared Lives Plus

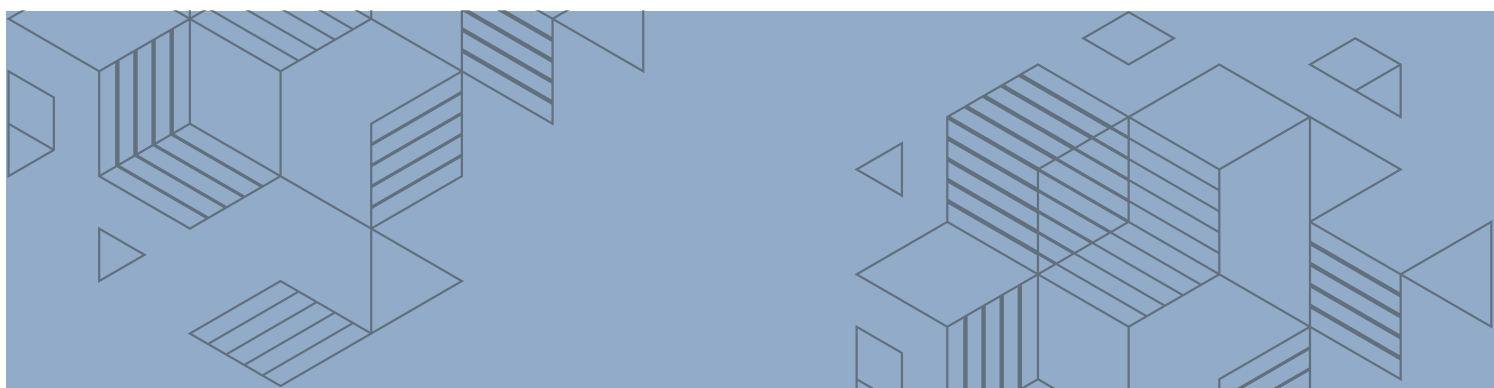
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Step 9: Exploring funding options

Housing for autistic adults and adults with a learning disability



Introduction

This step is about exploring revenue, capital and investment options to fund the development and ongoing costs of housing options for autistic adults and adults with a learning disability. This relates to sources of funding not only for autistic adults and adults with a learning disability with different types of needs, but also funding options for the different types of accommodation.

It is important to think innovatively about all potential sources of funding available, including but not limited to national funding streams, providers, private developers, investors or providers, and/or housing associations in your local area, local partnerships or consortiums, grants from charitable organisations, as well as funding from local authority revenue and local health commissioners/Integrated Care Boards. Equally important is identifying potential and suitable sites for housing developments, owned privately or by the council or NHS.

This step will improve your housing strategy and plan by clarifying the investment required by developers or providers and that which could be contributed by the local council or national funds.



KEY QUESTIONS

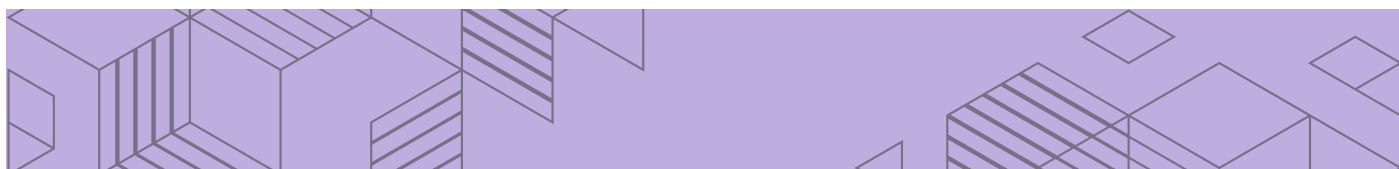
- What capital funding is available at the national level and how can this be accessed and deployed?
- What public sector grants or revenue sources are available at the local level to help fund housing options?
- What sources of capital funding, e.g. borrowing or social finance, are available at the local level?
- What capital or revenue funding is available from the local authority to help fund the development of housing options and meet ongoing housing and care and support costs?
- Who are the local or regional private developers or providers and housing associations that have historically been active investors in the development of housing options for autistic adults and adults with a learning disability?
- Are there any local or regional partnerships or consortiums that have a particular interest in funding housing options for autistic adults and adults with a learning disability?
- What privately, council or other publicly-owned land sites are available for development of housing with care and support?
- What is the process and pathway by which investors or developers can register their interest?

How to?



You will need to:

- Understand the different capital grants, funding programmes and loans that are available at the national level and what types of housing developments these can be accessed for. Some of these are listed below under sources of information and resources.
- It will be important to understand any restrictions or requirements attached to these funding streams, including any time constraints with respect to when such grants can be accessed, the longevity of the funding, when they need to be utilised by, and any recovery or recycling requirements.
- Identify local or national charitable organisations that provide capital and/or revenue grants for housing development.
- Identify and understand the financial models of other sources of capital funding such as borrowing and loans, private equity investment, real estate investment funds and social finance, often accessed by providers developing Specialised Supported Housing (SSH) that is exempt from the rent standard. Also consider any opportunities offered by general needs housing providers that also develop specialist housing.
- Identify your local council's sources of capital that are available and what types of housing developments these can be accessed for. For example, the Housing Revenue Account against which councils can borrow capital funding.
- Identify sources and timeframes of revenue such as rental income - often paid through housing benefit or universal credit, and the disability living allowance which are essential in covering the ongoing costs of housing maintenance, management and service charges and ensuring housing developments are viable.
- Build good working relationships with housing benefits teams to develop a shared understanding of rent rates, the applicability of the rent standard, how rent levels are set depending on how the development has been funded, the types of developments that are exempt from the rent standard, and how housing benefit regulations vary for different types of accommodation.
- Consider sources of revenue funding, (for example direct payments, individual service funds, continuing healthcare funding and section 117 aftercare funding for those leaving hospital) that will meet the ongoing care and support needs of autistic adults and adults with a learning disability in different housing types.
- Identify local housing associations, developers and providers that have been active in different types of housing developments historically and with whom the local authority already has good working relationships. It is also important to identify potential new developers/providers that are keen to enter the market and invest in building housing options for autistic adults and adults with a learning disability.



- Identify any local partnerships, for example a health and social care section 75 joint agreement or consortiums that include local housing associations, real estate investment companies, providers and developers that have an interest in housing for autistic adults and adults with a learning disability.
- Identify funding opportunities in the local housing market including local landlords, local letting agents, buy-to-let mortgages and parents of autistic adults and adults with a learning disability.
- Identify privately, council or publicly-owned land sites and assess their suitability for disposal for the development of housing options, and their associated costs. Similarly, identify any large development sites planned for housing in the local area, which could potentially allocate a small number of dedicated housing units to meet the identified needs of autistic adults and adults with a learning disability.
- Consider any potential opportunities through planning obligations (also known as section 106). This is an agreement between a developer and a local planning authority regarding measures that the developer must take to reduce their impact on the community. For example, all planning applications that involve affordable housing need to ensure that the required amount of affordable housing is developed, meets certain standards and is allocated to local people most in need of affordable housing. A commuted sum may also be paid as an alternative to the provision of affordable housing to the council.
- Develop a robust pathway for investors, providers and developers to register their interest, access further information if needed, and be kept engaged and up-to-date as plans develop.





SOURCES OF INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

Capital grants and funding programmes

- The Affordable Homes Programme run by Homes England (and in London by the Greater London Authority).
- The Home Ownership for people with long-term disabilities programme (HOLD), funded through the Affordable Homes Programme.
- The Mayor's Care and Support Specialised Housing Fund run by the Greater London Authority.
- The Better Care Fund, including the Disabled Facilities Grant.
- The Public Works Loan Board operated by HM Treasury.
- NHS England capital funding.

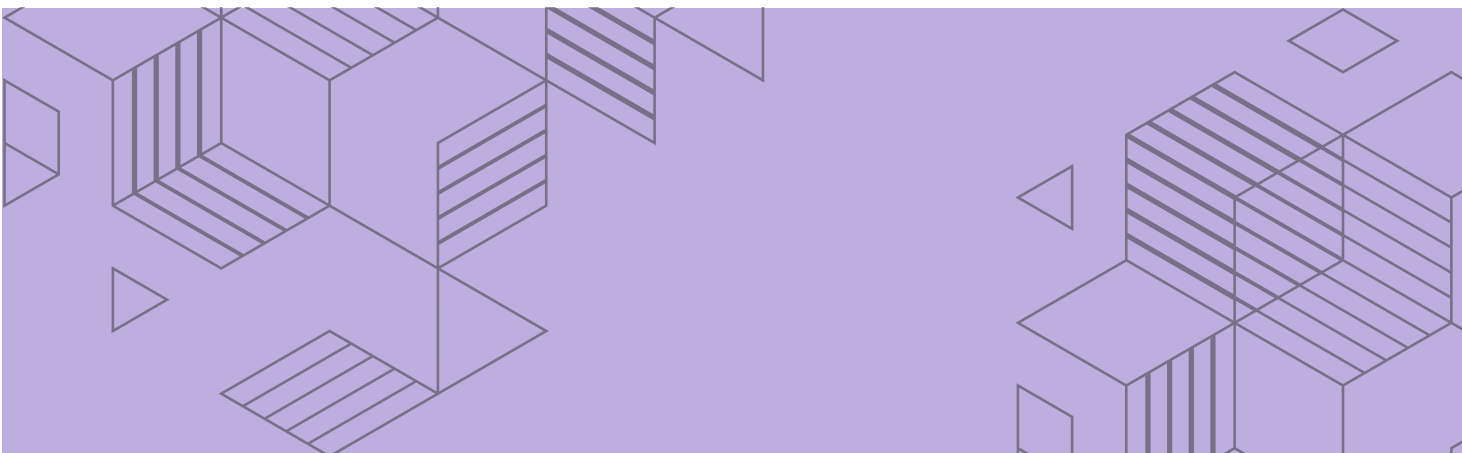
Other Information

- NHS England
- Capital funding guide – Homes England
- Department of Health and Social Care
- Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government
- Housing LIN
- Using land for homebuilding and regeneration
- Supported living resources for investors and providers
- Guide to section 106 contributions and CIL funding.



PARTNERS TO INVOLVE

- Local authority staff from adult social care, autistic adults and adults with a learning disability, housing and housing benefits, planning and regeneration, finance and resources, and land management.
- NHS England, Integrated Care Partnership, Disabled Facilities Grant teams and Better Care Fund managers.
- Homes England, Greater London Authority and local housing providers.





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 learn about different way housing in my local area can be funded.
- I understand the role that different organisations play at the national and local level, in funding housing.
- I help decide how the information about funding should be included in the housing strategy.

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 autistic adults and adults with a learning disability.
- 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](#).



EXAMPLE: ST EDBURG'S PATH – SUPPORTED LIVING SCHEME IN OXFORDSHIRE

St Edburg's Path in Bicester and Nickling Place in Banbury offer 12 purposefully designed apartments for autistic adults and adults with a learning disability. All units are self-contained with private gardens and look out onto secure communal courtyards. The scheme also provides communal kitchen and lounge areas alongside designated staff offices and overnight accommodation.

It was developed through a joint commissioning approach between Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) and Cherwell District Council (CDC) who recognised the need for better quality and more cost effective housing and the need to offer an alternative to residential care, The work was formalised through a transfer arrangement whereby a number of OCC sites (which were surplus to requirements) were sold to CDC at a price which reflected the agreement to develop the supported housing.

It was recognised that the scheme would be more costly to build than typical residential units due to their higher specification requirements. Homes England provided £440,000 of grant funding for these particular units under their Care and Support Specialised Housing Fund. Without this contribution the project may not have otherwise been deemed viable.

The developments have been hugely successfully with nearly all units now occupied and noticeable improvements in tenant wellbeing. The short-term level of revenue savings was not realised on the care contract at the outset, as many of the tenants needed one-to-one support at night on an individual basis. It is hoped that as the tenants become used to living more independently these savings will be realised in the longer term. However, the supported housing model commissioned does compare favourably against the equivalent costs in a registered setting.

To read more about the development scheme read the full example [here](#).

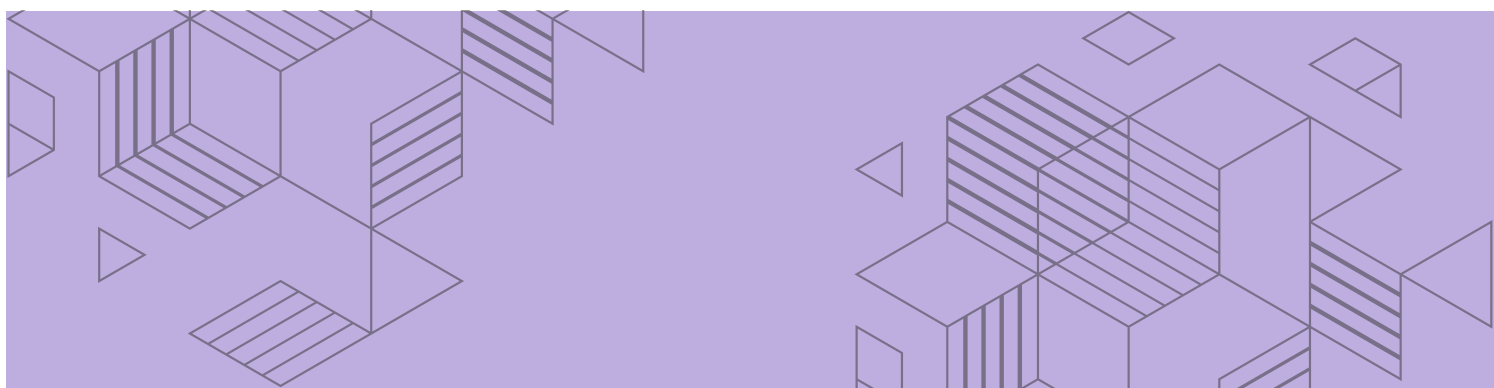
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Step 10: Social value of investment

Housing for autistic adults and adults with a learning disability



Introduction

This step will support you to assess the social value and investment implications for housing options for autistic adults and adults with a learning disability. This step will highlight how developing suitable housing can improve local economic, social and environmental wellbeing. It will also contribute to the requirements placed on local authorities by the Public Services (Social Value) Act (2012) by helping to identify additional community benefits of developing housing for autistic adults and adults with a learning disability. The Social Value Act requires all public sector organisations and their suppliers to look beyond the financial cost of a contract to consider how the services they commission and procure can improve the economic, social and environmental wellbeing of an area. Furthermore, the Procurement Act (2023) encourages public sector buyers to consider social value when awarding contracts.

What this step will add to your strategy:

- A list of wider economic, social, and environmental benefits linked to the proposed development of housing for autistic adults and adults with a learning disability in your area.



KEY QUESTIONS

- Are there any social value policies or social value statements for your locality?
 - How do the social value statements meet the Government's missions?
 - Has social value forecasting been part of your planning?
- How can you link any social value associated with developing housing for autistic adults and adults with a learning disability with the local social value strategy and Social Value Act (2012)? Consider the following:
 - Will the proposed development promote the improvement of skills and employment in the locality?
 - In which ways the development of housing options for autistic adults and adults with a learning disability will support the development of the local economy and local businesses?
 - What are the impacts of the development in the community and how can it promote health, safety, and resilience?
 - In which ways will the development improve and protect the environment?



KEY QUESTIONS

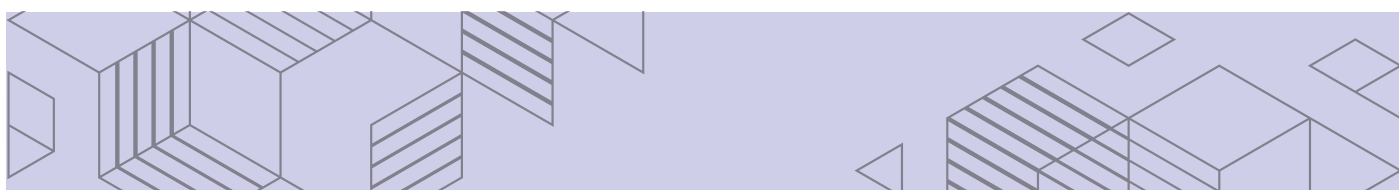
- How will the development support the new solutions to local problems and support innovation?
- To what extent do small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and voluntary, community and social enterprises (VCSEs) have a fair chance at public procurement in relation to the housing strategy?
- How will a social value evaluation and reporting be reflected on procurement and partnerships with stakeholders?
 - How will the social value commitments made by suppliers be reflected in contracts?

How to?



You will need to:

- Use the questions above to identify the key areas of social value to focus on.
- Gather any local social value policies and statements for your area and consider how these relate to any social value associated to the proposed development of housing options.
- Identify key social values associated with the proposed development of housing options. This may include:
 - Promoting local skills and employment – increasing local employment rates, fairer working conditions, and more opportunities for training and skills development, and employability, including for disadvantaged groups and young people.
 - Supporting growth – more opportunities for local businesses and voluntary organisations, improving the wellbeing and mental health of local staff, reducing inequalities, and embedding social value in the supply chain.
 - Improving health, safety, and resilience of communities – reduction in crime rates, creating healthier communities, supporting more people to live independently, and increased support to the community.
 - Environment – reducing carbon emissions and air pollution, protecting natural resources, promoting circular economy and local solutions, and promoting sustainable procurement practices.
 - Innovation – supporting innovation to develop skills and employment, developing communities, and protecting the environment.

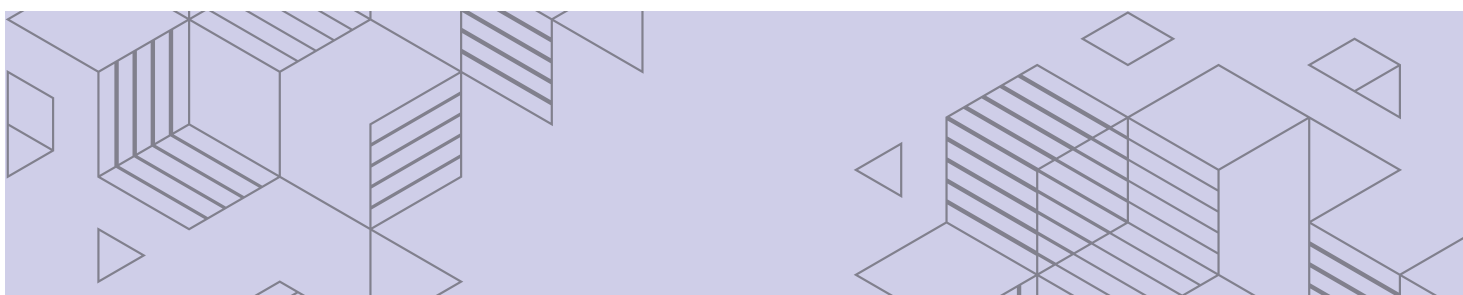


- There are many frameworks with guidance and templates to assess social value based on the above aspects, including the National Thermes Outcomes Measures (TOMs) framework.
- Incorporate the evidence collected through the above step into the business case linking key social values identified with local social value policies and with the Public Services (Social Value) Act (2012).



SOURCES OF INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

- Guidance on how to measure social value by HACT – this includes information on HACT's social value insight tool and the UK social value bank.
- UK Built Environment Bank – a development focused bank by HACT.
- Social value toolkit for local authorities.
- National Toms – framework developed by the Social Value Portal and LGA to support local authorities to identify social values.
- Procurement Act 2023 – guidance documents intended to provide technical guidance and help with interpretation and understanding.
- National procurement policy statement from the Government.
- Procurement Policy Note (PPN) 002: Taking account of social value in the award of central government contracts as well as the PPN 002 guide to using the social value model. PPN 002 only applies to central government, its agencies and non-departmental public bodies, not local authorities.
- PPN 003: The Public Service (Social Value) Act 2012 advice. PPN 003 only applies to central government, its agencies and non-departmental public bodies, not local authorities.
- Transforming public procurement – part of the LGA procurement hub with supporting resources about the Procurement Act 2023.
- Homes England: Measuring social value – research reports and guidance to inform the measurement of social value.
- National Housing Federation, (2020) Measuring social value: guidance for housing associations.
- Scottish Federation of Housing Associations – social value toolkit guidance notes.
- Guide to using social value model – embedding social value on tendering process.
- Hammersmith & Fulham Council – example of social value statement.
- West Sussex – example of social value framework.





PARTNERS TO INVOLVE

To fully explore the social value of developing housing options for autistic adults and adults with a learning disability, it is key that you work in partnership with relevant organisations and agencies. Below are some examples of key partners to be considered and their areas of expertise.

- Local authority housing and planning departments as well as finance/corporate resources, regeneration and growth or improvement
- Local authority procurement and community investment teams
- Senior local authority leaders focussed on housing, social care, and autistic adults and adults with a learning disability
- General needs and specialist housing providers (local authority, housing associations and commercial operators)
- Integrated care partnerships and Integrated Care Boards (for information on these see [here](#)), NHS provider collaboratives (for information on these see [here](#))
- Social care and community services providers
- Representative groups, charities, and user-led and community groups.





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 the key benefits of developing housing for autistic adults and adults with a learning disability to the community, local economy, NHS, and social care system.
- I decide what benefits are most relevant to me and should be included in the strategy.

For the partnership:

- We facilitate individuals' understanding of social value and help them understand the links between housing for autistic adults and adults with a learning disability and the wider benefits to the local economy, NHS, and social care system.
- We support people to decide what implications and benefits are most relevant to them and make sure this is featured in the strategy.

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](#).



EXAMPLE: NATIONAL HOUSING FEDERATION RESEARCH

The National Housing Federation (NHF) commissioned research to better understand how supported housing impacts homelessness, health and wellbeing, and the ways in which it supports and interacts with the NHS, social care, the justice system and other public services. The research comprised a snapshot survey of 2,119 individuals living in supported housing projects for working age adults alongside in-depth, qualitative interviews with 30 professionals working within the sector. The key findings are summarised below.

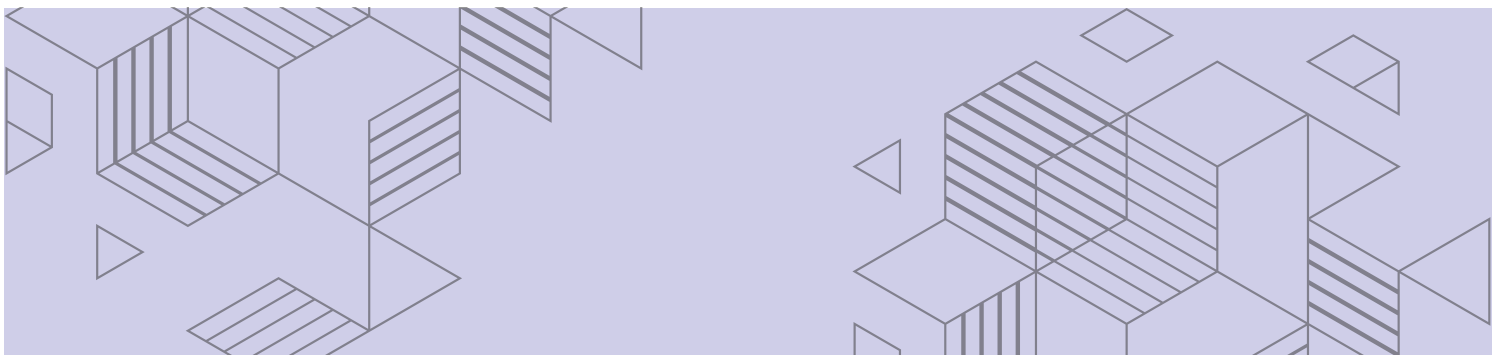
Impact on health and wellbeing

- The research suggests that supported housing has the greatest impact on the safety, health and social care of an individual. It:
 - helps meet people's basic needs for food, safety and shelter
 - provides personalised support through tailored support plans

- provides informal emotional support, often 24 hours a day
- offers wellbeing activities, independence and choice
- helps people to identify their health and care needs, apply for any benefits they are entitled to, and work out how to access support.
- Supported housing residents have complex needs: 9 out of 10 have at least one health condition or disability, and half of them are experiencing more than one of these conditions. They also have complex support needs including a history of mental ill-health, offending and domestic abuse. Supported housing provides a safe environment with highly skilled staff to ensure residents receive the support they need.
- Supported housing makes a substantial contribution to supporting its residents to access primary care and specialist treatment and diagnosis where needed. The research estimates that the service has assisted:
 - helps meet people's basic needs for food, safety and shelter
 - provides personalised support through tailored support plans
 - provides informal emotional support, often 24 hours a day
 - offers wellbeing activities, independence and choice
 - helps people to identify their health and care needs, apply for any benefits they are entitled to, and work out how to access support.
- Supported housing residents have complex needs: 9 out of 10 have at least one health condition or disability, and half of them are experiencing more than one of these conditions. They also have complex support needs including a history of mental ill-health, offending and domestic abuse. Supported housing provides a safe environment with highly skilled staff to ensure residents receive the support they need.
- I Supported housing makes a substantial contribution to supporting its residents to access primary care and specialist treatment and diagnosis where needed. The research estimates that the service has assisted:
 - 70,000 people to register with a local GP
 - 62,000 people to attend health appointments more consistently
 - 36,000 people to access diagnosis and/or treatment for mental health conditions
 - 32,000 people to access diagnosis and/or treatment for physical health conditions.

Impact on homelessness

- Transitional supported housing plays a key role in reducing and/or preventing higher risk forms of homelessness such as rough sleeping. It provides better security and a more supportive environment than alternatives such as 'bed and breakfast' accommodation.



- The research found that short-term and transitional supported housing is providing an emergency response to homelessness for many residents – 76% had an unstable housing history or were assumed homeless immediately prior to entering supported housing.
- Supported accommodation can also help people in transitional supported housing access secure tenancies, as well as understand their housing options. Overall, 56% of service users were deemed ready to move onto settled accommodation. For 53% of those ready to move on (regardless of length of stay and complexity) this was not possible because “finding a suitable move-on option is proving difficult”.
- The research estimates that were it not for supported housing, there would be an increase in core homelessness of around 41,000 people, with a further 30,000 people at significant risk of future homelessness (the cost to the public purse of long-term homelessness has been estimated at over £40,000 per person per year).

Read the full report [here](#).

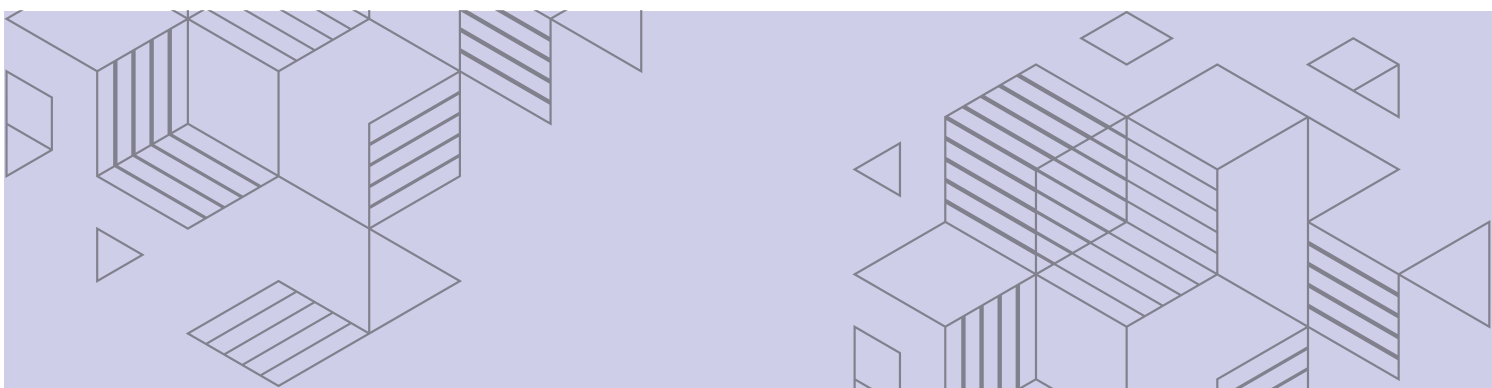
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Place-based strategies for housing for autistic adults and adults with a learning disability: strategy template



Introduction

This template will help you bring together all information collected in steps 1-10 of the toolkit for place-based plans for housing for autistic adults and adults with a learning disability, to create your strategy.

To help you organise and present the content, we have provided an example of a structure for the strategy with suggestions of top-level headings and contents for the different sections of the document. The structure was created based on examples of local strategies and business cases published by local authorities that were considered examples of good practice.

This template is designed to be used flexibly and therefore the structure below should be tailored as needed. A number of published examples are given below the template.

Strategy structure

Sections	Top level content	Toolkit step
Key advantages for investing in this locally	Local demography and housing needs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local demographic, economic, health, social care and housing trends, and local demand Needs and preferences for housing. Profile of people, including economic and health circumstances, and needs and preferences. 	<u>Step 1: Understanding demand</u> <u>Step 4: Identifying preferences and needs</u>

Sections	Top level content	Toolkit step
Key advantages for investing in this locally	Current and future demand, provision, and opportunities for expansion <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demand projections for different types of housing. • Current figures and future projections of housing provision for autistic adults and adults with a learning disability, priority areas, and types of housing offered • Unmet needs and areas of priority. 	<u>Step 1: Understanding demand</u> <u>Step 2: Map current provision of housing</u> <u>Step 4: Identifying preferences and needs</u>
	Local market benefits <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Description of the local market for housing for autistic adults and adults with a learning disability with an overview of factors driving the local market, affordability, scope for innovation, and opportunities for investment • Benefits of investing in the locality based on opportunities offered in the local market • What is currently commissioned, and future commissioning priorities for housing for autistic adults and adults with a learning disability 	<u>Step 3: Understand the local market</u> <u>Step 5: Understand the commissioning landscape</u>
	Local support <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local strategy: vision, ambitions and strategy, benefits and support offered by the local council 	<u>Step 2: Map current provision of housing</u> <u>Step 3: Understand the local market</u>

Sections	Top level content	Toolkit step
Opportunities for Investment	What is the local priority? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Types of housing available for investment. Investment packages – types of housing and priority areas for development. 	<u>Step 1: Understanding demand</u> <u>Step 2: Map current provision of housing</u> <u>Step 3: Understand the local market</u> <u>Step 6: Drawing on best practice</u>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Key advantages, costs and benefits, and social value of housing options prioritized investment packages. Commercial options and funding opportunities. 	<u>Step 7: Assess costs and benefits</u> <u>Step 9: Exploring commercial options</u> <u>Step 10: Social value of investment</u>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Current providers and opportunities for partnership 	<u>Step 3: Understand the local market</u> <u>Step 5: Understand the commissioning landscape</u> <u>Step 9: Exploring commercial options</u>



Sections	Top level content	Toolkit step
Local geography – further information on specific localities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Map of the region with further detail on neighbourhoods with priority for investment • Character – mainly urban or rural, population density, demography and future projections • Demand, provision, gaps, and priorities – a summary of opportunities for investment in the locality • Plans for development and regeneration, vision for future development, local infrastructure, and other local benefits 	<p>Step 1: understanding demand</p> <p>Step 2: Map current provision of housing for autistic adults and adults with a learning disability</p> <p>Step 3: Understand the local market</p>
Relevant documents and policies	<p>Links to relevant documents and policies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Masterplans, regional network plan, strategic delivery plan, management plan, local plan, housing needs assessments, local planning policies. • Joint strategic needs assessments, joint health and wellbeing strategies, local adult social care strategy, local housing strategies for autistic adults and adults with a learning disability. 	<u>All steps</u>
Information on specific housing design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information on specific design requirements for each type of housing. 	<u>Step 6: Drawing on best practice</u>



EXAMPLES OF STRATEGIES

- South Yorkshire ICB - Housing with Support for People with Learning Disabilities and/or Autism – 2022 Market Position Statement
- Cornwall Council – Supported and Specialist Housing Strategy 2023-2050
- Cheshire and Merseyside – Housing Strategy: People with Learning Disabilities and/or Autism
- Telford & Wrekin Co-operative Council - Specialist and Supported Accommodation Strategy 2020 - 2025

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