

Report to: East Sussex Strategic Partnership
Date: 17 July 2009
Title: Pride of Place strategy review – Older People
Author: Geraldine O'Shea, Coordinator, East Sussex Older People's Partnership Board
Purpose: To present findings by the East Sussex Older People's Partnership Board of a review of the Pride of Place countywide strategy for Older People.

Recommendation: That the ESSP Executive Board:

1. To note findings of report
2. To consider receiving monitoring information on NI125: Achieving independence for older people through rehabilitation / intermediate care
3. To approve the amendment to strategic priority and key tasks to include carers, and
4. To consider ways in which ESSP and its partners can further assist in delivering outcomes for older people and carers

1. Background

- 1.1. At its meeting on 18 September 2008, the ESSP board agreed to put in place a rolling programme of strategy reviews and updates, working through existing countywide thematic and population based partnerships.

2. Introduction

- 2.1. This report presents findings of a review undertaken by the East Sussex Older People's Partnership Board of the Older People's countywide section Pride of Place to determine whether the strategic priority (outcome) 'To support older people to have a healthy, active and independent life' and key tasks to deliver this, remain relevant.
- 2.2. The Older Peoples Partnership board has been established since 2006 and brings together key agencies and local people including ESCC, NHS, housing, voluntary and independent sector, older people and carers. The board oversees strategic planning of older peoples and carers services across East Sussex.
- 2.3. The review has involved an analysis of performance of specific targets within the LAA and other key action plans; a review of evidence and priorities identified through the review/refresh of the Joint Commissioning Strategy for Older People and associated countywide plans (listed in the Pride of Place Countywide Action Plan).

3. High level summary of performance

LAA targets:

- 3.1. Summarised in table 1 (appendix 1) is the overall performance of the LAA targets which have been assigned to older people in the county wide action plan. Table 2 (appendix 2) illustrates how these targets relate to the key tasks which will help us achieve our strategic priority for older people in east Sussex.
- 3.2. Our performance in relation to the LAA targets has shown real improvements in delivering services for older people. We are supporting more people to live independently, increased the number of carers who are receiving a service, more people are taking up the option of self directed support and access to public transport has improved. In addition we are on track to reducing mortality rates for both men and women and increased participation in sporting and leisure activities.

- 3.3. Our success in achieving this level of performance in these key areas is attributable to innovative partnership working in adopting a holistic approach to developing and improving services for older people and carers.

County wide partnerships plans

- 3.4. There are a number of county wide partnership plans (see appendix 2) with associated actions plans with clear targets and timescales which will help us achieve our key strategic priority and tasks. These plans are reviewed and updated on an annual basis, taking into account national and local priorities and identify any gaps in services to ensure that they are on track to achieve our key priorities for older people.
- 3.5. Two of these plans are currently undergoing a refresh, the Joint Commissioning Strategy for Carers and the Joint Older People's Commissioning Strategy 2007/10. This refresh includes active and wide engagement with all stakeholders and older people and carers in East Sussex. We are aiming to publish the new plans in winter 2009 and summer 2010 respectively.
- 3.6. As part of this review we have identified some key activity and outcomes achieved in these plans and approaches, partnerships and projects which evidence that we are on track to achieve our strategic priority for older people. These include:
- a. **Modernisation of Day opportunities for older people project-** strategic approach to improving day opportunities for older people.
 - b. **Older People's Health Improvement Partnership Groups** - these groups oversee the delivery of a range of activities and projects to maintain independence and promotes healthy living.
 - c. **Supporting People Commissioning project for older people-** inclusive approach to planning future commissioning of services to meet housing related support needs.
 - d. **Enhanced Response and Generic Worker Rapid Response teams-** provide quick responding home care service and/or health care service for people attending A&E who do not require hospital admission to enable them to return home.
 - e. **Care passport** - pilot developed by local voluntary organisation to provide information about the 'cared for person' to hospitals to improve communication. Relaunched in 2009.
 - f. **Training activities for carers-** funding provided to organisations to provide training related to specific conditions e.g. dementia, stroke and vision awareness, stress reduction and leisure activities.
 - g. **Improved Library service and IT training** - 250 public access computers upgraded in libraries and computer taster session for over 50's.
 - h. **LINK-** East Sussex Local Involvement Network which replaces Patient and Public Involvement forum. Enables individuals and groups to ask questions and make suggestions to local health and care organisations. Members of East Sussex Seniors Association are also members of LINK.
 - i. **Improving access to transport** -The Head of Operations for Transport attends the East Sussex Seniors Association Transport Theme group. Work includes consultation sessions with group to discuss the new Bus and Community Transport Strategy and involvement in improving information on community transport

- j. **Benefits advice outreach services** Service provided by partnership of voluntary organisations to increase uptake of benefits by older people and carers. 6205 older people provided with a service. Average of £915.65 per annum in benefits for each older person provided with a service.

3.7. Further details of the above activities and additional examples have been grouped under the key tasks and are summarised in the attached briefing paper (appendix 3). To evidence outcomes and how some of these activities have directly made a difference to older people's and carers lives please see attached two case studies from the 'Home from Hospital' service and extra care housing (appendix 4).

4. **Key issues and opportunities arising from strategy reviews /refreshes**

4.1. Over the last two years there has been significant progress both nationally and locally in driving forward changes and improvements in services to older people through:

- a. The review of health and social care services and the adoption of new goals
- b. Recognising the importance of other key services beyond health and social care in improving the well being of older people and carers
- c. Successful partnerships and the active engagement of older people and carers

4.2. Building on the overall direction and priorities outlined in the Government White Paper ' Our Health, Our Care, Our Say: A new direction for community services' (2006) we have seen the publication of key strategies/initiatives which will determine the future development of services for older people and carers in East Sussex:

- a. Putting People First – a shared vision and commitment to the transformation of Adult Social Care (2007)
- b. World Class Commissioning – a programme for transforming the way health and care services are commissioned (2008)
- c. National Strategy for Housing in an Ageing Society (2008)
- d. National Dementia Strategy (2008)
- e. National Carers Strategy, Carers at the heart of 21st century families and communities (2008)
- f. Establishment of the Care Quality Commission (CQC) to regulate the quality of Health and Social Care and look after interests of people detained under the Mental Health Act in England (2009).

4.3. They identify some important goals, challenges and opportunities for East Sussex to achieve which will make a significant difference to the lives of older people and carers and the way in which partners work together such as:

- a. Personalisation, choice and independence (including self directed support)
- b. Strategic shift towards prevention and early intervention for service users and the wider community.
- c. The need to take into account the six dimensions developed by CQC for the assessment of quality in health and social care

- 4.4. This review of the older people's section in 'Pride of Place' will result in some changes to the text in the countywide Older People's section but these are factual updates not substantive changes¹.
- 4.5. In addition, the associated reviews of our county wide plans and performance to date on LAA targets and other key performance indicators supports that our key strategic priority for 2026 and key tasks are still relevant and fit for purpose.
- 4.6. However, ESSP may find it helpful to receive monitoring information on NI125²: Achieving independence for older people through rehabilitation / intermediate care, which is not contained with the LAA. The indicator only covers people discharged from hospital but goes some way to reflect one of our new priorities / direction of travel.
- 4.7. The role of carers in relation to supporting older people is acknowledged through the inclusion of NI 135 and the importance of the Joint Commissioning Strategy for Carers as an important delivery plan in achieving our strategic priority for older people. We understand that the needs of carers within the community strategy will be presented to the board in October 2009. However, to further high light the importance of carers in that carers can both be older people and carers it is proposed that our strategic priority (and associated tasks) is amended to read: **'To support older people and carers to have a healthy, active and independent life'**

5. Conclusions

- 5.1. This review has successfully shown us that we are heading in the right direction to achieving our strategic priority for older people. This has been supported by the good performance of all partners in achieving performance targets for 2008/09 or being on track to do this. However there are challenging times ahead and it is key that we constantly review our approaches to take on board significant changes. It is important that we acknowledge the key role of carers within our strategic priority.

¹ Reference to East Sussex Downs and Weald and Hastings and Rother Primary Care trust should now be replaced with 'NHS East Sussex Downs and Weald, NHS Hastings and Rother' as the organisation has changed its name. This applies across the whole strategy.

Replace the last sentence of second paragraph with the following: 'Local older people, service users and carers have also been involved in the design, purchasing and monitoring of care and support services and major investment projects.'

² Definition of NI 125: The proportion of older people aged 65 and over discharged from hospital to their own home or to a residential or nursing care home or extra care housing bed for rehabilitation, with a clear intention that they will move on/back to their own home (including a place in extra care housing or an adult placement scheme setting) who are at home or in extra care housing or an adult placement scheme setting three months after the date of their discharge from hospital

Appendix 1: Summary of overall performance of LAA targets assigned to older people

| GREEN – THE TARGET IS ON TRACK TO BE MET | | | |
|--|--|--|--|
| National Indicator | 2008/09 Performance | | Comments |
| | Target | End of year 1 result | |
| NI 120 All-age all cause mortality rate | Males: 594.5 Females: 430.6 | 2007 data Males: 599.6 Females: 438.6 | 2007 data (Males 599.6, Females 438.6) shows that the County is currently on track to meet the 2009 targets. |
| NI 130 Social Care clients receiving Self Directed Support | Target for 2010/11: 30% (refreshed) | 15.3% | The rate of improvement against the baseline exceeds the rate required to meet the 2010/11 target of 30%. |
| NI 135 Carers receiving needs assessment or review and a specific carer's service, or advice and information | 15.85% (refreshed) | 18.2% | Early quarter 4 performance = 18.2% but there is confidence that this will be exceeded further. This indicator measures the proportion of our clients who are carers: the increased proportion is a very positive outcome. |
| NI 136 People supported to live independently through social services (all adults) | 2718.36 (4.4% increase on 2007/08) (refreshed) | 3191.41 | Q4 performance is 3191.41. Based on the 2008/09 GFS return, this target has been exceeded. |
| NI 142 Percentage of people who are supported to maintain independent living (NI 142) | 98.34% | 98.97% | Performance for Quarter 4 was 98.97%. |
| NI 175 Proportion of the total population within 30 minutes access by public transport for arrival at a key centre by 9.00am. | Target revised after LAA refresh (Q4) to 66% | 69% | All partners have now agreed the revised indicator (incorporating the return journey element) and target levels. This is now included in the East Sussex LAA. This revised target also now becomes the LTP2 target. Target 08/09: 66% Target 09/10: 67% Target 10/11: 68% |

GREEN – THE TARGET IS ON TRACK TO BE MET

| National Indicator | 2008/09 Performance | | Comments |
|--------------------|---------------------|----------------------|----------|
| | Target | End of year 1 result | |

AMBER – NOT ON TRACK TO MEET THE TARGET, REMEDIAL ACTION REQUIRED

| National Indicator | 2008/09 Performance | | Comments |
|---|---------------------|----------------------|---|
| | Target | End of year 1 result | |
| NI 8 Adult participation in sport and active recreation | 23% | 22% | The result for the County from the Sport England Surveys carried out in 2007/08 was 22.0%, which is slightly above the baseline figure of 21.5%, but below the target of 23% for the year. Performance is rated as amber as the result is below the target, but the confidence interval of +/- 1.6% overlaps the target. The number of people surveyed in 2007/08 was less than for the baseline, and survey data will be accumulated over time to give a larger overall sample to compare with the baseline. As a result, most changes at this point - positive or negative - are not 'statistically significant' i.e. the difference may reflect random changes from surveying twice, rather than real changes in activity levels. Sport Development Officers across the County are meeting to coordinate work to promote participation in active recreation, with support from the Sussex County Sports Partnership. |

Pride of Place

The Sustainable Community Strategy for East Sussex

2008-2026

Working Towards a Better Future for Local People and Local Communities

Delivering Outcomes Older People

EASTBOURNE ● HASTINGS ● LEWES DISTRICT ● ROTHER ● WEALDEN

| SCS Theme | SCS strategic priority (Outcome) | Key tasks | Countywide Action Plan | LAA | Other Countywide Partnership Plans |
|--------------|--|---|---|---|--|
| Older people | By 2026: To support older people to have a healthy, active and independent life | Develop high quality, modern and efficient health, social care and housing support services | 6. Enable partners to strengthen links and build capacity to address countywide housing needs and related issues | 120 130 135 136 142 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Joint Commissioning Strategy for Older People; Time of Our Lives; Joint Commissioning Strategy for Carers; Supporting People; Putting People First Local Development Frameworks: Eastbourne, Hastings, Rother, Wealden, Lewes |
| | | Provide opportunities for continued learning and development in later life | 9. Develop a strategic and partnership approach to raising aspirations through life long learning and development | 142 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Time of Our Lives Supporting people Local Development Frameworks: Eastbourne, Hastings, Rother, Wealden, Lewes |
| | | Assist older people to play an active part in community life and have a collective voice | 13. Encourage partners to share knowledge to help understand our communities better | 142 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Time of Our Lives Supporting People |
| | | Provide access to activities that promote a healthy lifestyle | 15. Use the 2012 Olympics to promote people's interests in sports and leisure | 8 142 175 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Time of Our Lives, Joint Commissioning Strategy for Older People Supporting People Local Development Frameworks: Eastbourne, Hastings, Rother, Wealden, Lewes |
| | | Assist older people to gain better access to services and transport, and those on lower incomes to gain better access to financial support and benefits | 3. Encourage partners to improve access to information on services, wherever and however residents want it 4. Encourage relevant partners to integrate sustainable transport provision across the county | 130 142 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Time of Our Lives Supporting people Putting People First Local Development Frameworks: Eastbourne, Hastings, Rother, Wealden, Lewes |

Appendix 3: The Strategic partnership approach to narrowing the gap across the county for older people and carers

1. Introduction

- 1.1. This briefing paper summarises some key activity and outcomes on approaches, partnerships, services and projects to narrow key gaps in relation to achieving our strategic priority for older people: '**To support older people to have a healthy, active and independent life**' (ESCC Sustainable Community Strategy-Pride of Place 2008-2026).
- 1.2. For ease of reference this information has been grouped under the key tasks to achieve this priority.

2. Key tasks

- 2.1. Develop high quality, modern and efficient health, social care and housing support services:
 - a. **The Older Peoples Partnership board-** established since 2006 and brings together key agencies and local people including ESCC, NHS, housing, voluntary and independent sector, older people and carers. Oversees strategic planning of older peoples and carers services across East Sussex. *Ref: Joint Older Peoples Commissioning Strategy (2007/10), Success and opportunities 2007/09*
 - b. **Modernisation of Day opportunities for older people project-** strategic approach to improving day opportunities for older people. Project incorporates 4 Council run day centres in **Hastings**, Bexhill, Uckfield and Lewes, voluntary sector contracts and recommissioning of day services. Working closely with community and voluntary sector partners, staff, service users and carers to develop models of service. Aim to provide improved choice and range of day opportunities for all levels of need, both building and non building based services. *Ref: Day Opportunities Strategic Framework.*
 - c. **Day care pilot for older people with dementia-** aim to role out national dementia development and learning project in **Hastings** and Rother- alternative model of day care which responds to national dementia strategy recommendations for improved short breaks. Pilot will provide 3-6 day care places over 2-3 year period based on Supported Accommodation model- home setting and one to one support.
 - d. **Partnerships for older peoples projects (POPP)** - 'Independence First' programme funded by DOH which provides range of preventative services- over 7,500 benefited. National recognition for evaluation and lessons learnt to inform future investment decisions. Long term investment in range of services. County connect helps staff from partner agencies to make referrals to each other, memory assessment and Support Team (MAST) - assessment and sign posting service for people with dementia. Navigator service. *Ref: POPP reports*
 - e. **Supporting People Commissioning project for older people-** inclusive approach to planning future commissioning of services to meet housing related support needs which includes partners from East Sussex County Council, district and borough Councils, NHS, Probation, providers and older people and carers. Outcomes to achieve accessible services for all older people irrespective of tenure and locality (focus on socially excluded- rural areas, BME groups and housebound) *Ref vision and consultation pack*
 - f. **Home from Hospital and Take Home and Settle Services-** low level support provided by voluntary sector to people discharged from general hospitals in Eastbourne and **Hastings**. Services provide transport, help with

light housing keeping, shopping and signpost to other services such as befriending and benefits advice. Support discharge and prevent readmission. Provided service to 745 (HFH) and 206 (THS at Conquest Hospital in Hastings) people in 2008/09. *Ref: case study*

- g. Age Well Project** - will provide range of care services on four sites in East Sussex including **Hastings**, Rother, Uckfield and Ringmer. The project will provide 180 beds which will meet the needs of people with dementia, provide intermediate care and respite services.
 - h. GP pilots** – GP working in A&E in both hospitals in Eastbourne and **Hastings** to provide triage to prevent unnecessary admission.
 - i. Enhanced Response and Generic Worker Rapid Response teams** - provide quick responding home care service and/or health care service for people attending A&E who do not require hospital admission to enable them to return home.
 - j. Extra care housing schemes in Hastings, Eastbourne and Rother.** Marlborough House, in **Hastings**- developed in partnership with borough council and NHS partners. Provides alternative to residential care – 24 hour on site care and support service and range of facilities including GP surgery, community café, IT classes and outreach service to support people in community. Evidence of improved health and social care outcomes for residents and local community. *Ref case study*
 - k. Support to Age Concern Hastings** – partners from ESCC, HBC and the PCT worked with ACH to support them through a financial crisis in late 2007 by providing special funding. Ongoing office support from 3 partners provided to support plan for sustainability during 2008/09. Successful outcome as ACH and Age Concern East Sussex merged in April 2009 and services in Hastings to be further developed.
 - l. The Carers Strategy group and carers commissioning group** - established since 2004. These groups bring together key agencies including ESCC, NHS, Voluntary sector and local carers who are involved in both developing, delivery and receiving services. The groups oversee the development and implementation of strategic planning and the commissioning of services respectively. Refresh of joint carers strategy currently out for wider consultation with focus on key areas identified by Governments Carers Strategy. Commissioning group evaluates and awards contracts on an annual basis for innovative services (funded by carer's development fund).
 - m. Care passport**- pilot developed by local voluntary organisation to provide information about the 'cared for person' to hospitals to improve communication. Relunched in 2009. *Ref Care passport*
- 2.2. Provide opportunities for continued learning and development in later life
- 2.3. Assist older people to play an active part in community life and have a collective voice
- a. Older People's services Interdepartmental Working group**- established since 2007 and brings together range of services within ESCC responsible for universal services e.g. libraries, adult learning, transport and trading standards and older people and carers. Oversees development of range of activities to support older people's quality of life and well being- *Ref: Time of our lives strategy.*
 - b. Improved Library service and IT training** - 250 public access computers upgraded in libraries and computer taster session for over 50's.

- c. **Training activities for carers**- funding provided to organisations to provide training related to specific conditions e.g. dementia, stroke and vision awareness, stress reduction and leisure activities
 - d. **East Sussex Seniors Association** – Umbrella organisation for 7 independent senior forum groups across East Sussex. Members are representative of older people and carers from each locality with East Sussex. Groups are actively involved at all levels of ESCC development and planning activity e.g. Downlands extra care scheme. They publish own newsletters and organise events for older people e.g. Big Little Heart – successful drama workshop on dangers of heart disease. Have a number of special theme groups, health and social care and transport. *Ref ESSA chart and Downlands case study*
 - e. **LINK**- East Sussex Local Involvement Network which replaces Patient and Public Involvement forum. Enables individuals and groups to ask questions and make suggestions to local health and care organisations. Members of ESSA are also members of LINK.
 - f. **Support for carers involvement** – ESCC fund training and support provide by Voluntary organisations to enable carers to participate in development, implementation and monitoring activity.
 - g. **Intergenerational projects** – democracy challenge event organised by ESCC which encouraged links between different generations by setting practical tasks. Helped to break down barriers.
- 2.4. Provide access to activities that promote a healthy lifestyle
- a. **Older People’s Health Improvement Partnership Groups** - two groups which cover the east and west of the county respectively (Hastings and Rother and Lewes, Wealden and Eastbourne) which bring together key agencies from ESCC, NHS, Voluntary and independent sector, older people and carers. The group oversees the delivery of a range of activities and projects to maintain independence and promotes healthy living. Activities include:
 - Healthy lifestyle groups held in Hastings and Rother which include taster session on exercises and healthy eating.
 - Health promotion activities held in housing for older people schemes in Hastings and Rother
 - Information provided by health living co-ordinator to 440 people over 60
 - Healthy living sessions held with patients at GP surgeries in both Hastings and rural areas. Focus on reaching older people with mental health issues, BME and travellers
 - Wide distribution of ‘Forward from 50’ handbook
 - EXTEND (exercise and movement to music sessions for over 60’s) - available across the County. PCT trained 8 new tutors in 2008 to enable more classes to be set up. Staff in Council day centres trained to hold exercise classes.
 - b. **Healthier Hasting Partnership Board**- multi agency group lead by public health and includes representatives from Hastings Borough Council, PCT’s, ESHT, local voluntary and community groups, ESCC (Lead Strategic Commissioning Manager – older people). Aim of board to support delivery of strategies/services which impact on health outcomes and tackling inequalities in health.
- 2.5. Assist older people to gain better access to services and transport, and those on lower incomes to gain better access to financial support and benefits

- a. **Benefits advice outreach services-** funded by ESCC for the past 4 years. Service provided by partnership of voluntary organisations to increase uptake of benefits by older people and carers. 6205 older people provided with a service. Average of £915.65 per annum in benefits for each older person provided with a service.
- b. **Forward from 50 handbooks- a guide to later life-** publication of 25,000 copies of handbook in 2008 which provides range of advice, information and contact details of key services for older people and carers. Due to high demand there was a need to publish an additional 15,000 copies mid year. Handbook was jointly funded partnership project.
- c. **Improving access to transport** -The Head of Operations for Transport attends the East Sussex Seniors Association Transport Theme group. Work includes consultation sessions with group to discuss the new Bus and Community Transport Strategy and involvement in improving information on community transport, funded by 'Down Your Way'. Joint project between Adult Social Care and Transport & Environment to review transport services in area of County (North Wealden) to establish whether meeting needs and best value, gaps in service with view to informing approach across the County. Contract with Community Transport in the Lewes area who provide a wheelchair accessible service and an escort to users of the contracted preventative services. In Rye and rural Rother, it is purchased directly by the contracted independent provider to enable users with high level needs to get to their day provision.
- d. **Carers support grants** - individual grants which enable carers to pay for a range of transport options, respite breaks, training and leisure activities.
- e. **Advocacy pilots** - to ensure successful implementation of Self Directed Support, (as apart of Putting People First agenda). ESCC to fund 3 local voluntary organisations to run pilots. The project will consist of two key elements: (1) Running three advocacy pilots to make independent (one-to-one) or 'formal' advocacy accessible to older people, disabled people and carers who use social care services; and (2) setting up a county-wide advocacy network to engage with all advocacy providers across the county in developing advocacy services in the context of Putting People First.
- f. **Demonstrator site bids to DOH** – successful outcome to partnership bid with PCT and Sussex Partnership Trust to provide support for carers of older people with dementia. Second bid to provide GP Liaison Worker and two support officers to work with GPs is through to second round of bidding process.

Appendix 4: Case studies

1. Case study - Home from Hospital service

Client identified

Mrs R. Admitted to hospital due to severe chest infection she also suffered from severe depression and had not been eating properly or looking after her general health. She had recently moved home and had been unable to find the strength or motivation to unpack many of her belongings

Coordinator role

During the assessment the client was most tearful and concerned that she had been unable to contact her family who live in America. The coordinator assessed the client's immediate needs and felt it would be appropriate to find a volunteer who would be willing to visit twice a week and also encourage the client to go out for short walks with the volunteer.

Outcome

An experienced volunteer visited the next day and helped Mrs R. start to unpack her belongings. During the weeks that followed the client went with her volunteer to choose her own shopping and it was felt she benefited from getting out of her flat and focusing on other things. The coordinator contacted the client's family through a social worker and her son arranged to visit his mother. The client was also referred to Age Concerns befriending service.

Start Date

10/02/09-finish date 12/03/09

12 visits 16 hours.

2. Case Study- Service user and carer involvement in development of an extra care housing scheme for older people in East Sussex- April 2009

Introduction

The purpose of this case study is to briefly describe the benefits of the involvement of service users and carers in the development of extracare housing schemes for older people in East Sussex from both commissioner and service user perspective and to look at how these benefits can be both replicated and improved in future developments

Background

Downlands extra care housing scheme in Peacehaven is in the process of being developed through a partnership between East Sussex County Council, Saxon Weald Housing Association, the Primary Care Trust and Lewes District Council. This mixed tenure scheme will consist of 41 one and two bedded flats. 11 flats will be shared ownership and 30 flats will be social rented (of which 8 flats will be for people with dementia). The aim of the scheme is to provide independent living accommodation for residents but also to become a community hub for the local community. The scheme is due to open in September 2009.

What happened

Downlands is a new building therefore representative groups of older people and carers from the local community have had a dual role in representing prospective service users and carers who will access facilities/services either as residents or from the local community in all key areas and stages of the development. Their involvement has included:

- Being members of the Downlands project steering group-they attend meetings and are actively involved in the decision making process. Pre- meeting briefings are provided to support representatives
- Being consulted on the building design prior pre planning stage and influencing preferred options for interior design
- Being involved in the tender evaluation process of the care and support service for the scheme
- Being members of the Community and engagement sub group
- Input to the job description for the Community Participation worker

Impact:

Representative service users and carers

- Feedback on design and furnishing has meant changes in colour and design in communal areas and a major contribution to design of the courtyard area
- Feedback on maximising use of the communal area for both residents and the wider community resulted in the recruitment of a community participation worker to do this work. A carers representative will sit on the recruitment panel for this post
- Involvement in the tender evaluation for care and support increased the understanding of process and given reassurance of care taken in ensuring the best quality of care provision
- Feel empowered to directly influence the way services are being developed
- Visited other schemes in the area and fed back on good/bad points
- Tested and feedback their views on catering to be offered in scheme by local social enterprise

Commissioners

- Commissioners are able to benefit from ideas and suggestions from service users and carers for new developments which will influence the design of future schemes and serve as a template for how we can continue to involve service users/ carers
- Engaging the local community from the outset, rather than in the later stages of scheme development has greatly helped the progress of the scheme - from obtaining planning permission to pre-empting complaints during the building stage.

Wider implications

There is an ongoing commitment from key partners in the statutory, voluntary and independent sectors in East Sussex to ensure that service users, carers and older people in the community are actively involved in the development, delivery and performance monitoring of all services. The successful development of extra care housing and the active involvement of service users and carers in this process significantly contributes to key priorities and tasks for housing in the East Sussex Sustainable Strategy 'Pride of Place', local housing and support strategies for older people and carers and the Joint Commissioning Strategy for older people.