3. Accommodation

Having choice and control over where we live and who we live with is a basic foundation block to fulfilling our human potential to thrive and succeed in life. We can make a big difference to the quality of life of people with learning disabilities by improving the local housing offer.

Where we are now

As of November 2018, 140 adults with learning disabilities were placed in residential care and the number placed in this type of accommodation out of borough is higher than the placements made in borough. We know that this is high compared to other London Local Authorities which is nearer to 100 people in residential care.

In the future we expect fewer people with learning disabilities to be accommodated in residential care homes in line with national and local policy.

Currently there are approximately 144 people with learning disabilities living in supported accommodation of which there are a high number of people across the 44-55 age groups. The Council commissions a range of providers to supply supported housing for people with learning disabilities. The majority of these are in small group homes, some of which are cluster flats where people have their own from door but share some facilities with other people with learning disabilities, and some of it is in dispersed flats in the community.

What needs to happen?

Our priorities are to:

- Support more people with learning disabilities have the opportunity to access a range of different types of accommodation, with flexible models of support. Including living in ordinary community settings, in good quality housing with their own front door
- Provide specialist accommodation and adaptations as needed, by specialist accommodation we mean:
  - Exploring short term accommodation for people to access when needed in times of crisis and/or potential crisis, to minimise/prevent potential admissions to assessment and treatment units and/or hospital setting.
  - Bespoke accommodation based on individual need i.e. consideration to accessibility, sensory environments
  - Skilled workforce to work with those that challenge services
  - Same gender/age settings
- Better understanding of current and future need to enable reduction:
  - In numbers of people living in residential care homes
  - In the number of people placed out of borough
Increase the number of people living in a range of different types of supported housing close to their family and community, including more specialist cluster schemes, Foster Care, Shared Lives and Extra Care Housing

Increase the number of people with learning disabilities who are home owners and tenants of ordinary “general needs” housing

Make sure people with learning disabilities have the support they need to feel safe in their home

Make better use of assistive technology to maximise independence

Clear information on accommodation offer across all ages.

How this will be achieved
We will:

- We will better understand what people’s accommodation and support needs are now and in the future
- Understand the design requirements for housing people with complex behaviour and/or physical disabilities that may be thought of as challenging
- Ensure the future housing needs of people with learning disabilities are addressed in local housing and planning strategies
- Ensure consistent joint person centred planning is in place to consider the housing needs of:
  - younger adults
  - ageing people
  - people still living with families, and instigate plans accordingly.
- Work with housing and support providers to make sure that the right mix of different kinds of accommodation is available
- Help people to understand the range of housing and support options open to them, by ensuring effective information is accessible to enable people with a learning disability and/or their family carers to make decisions and plan for the future
- Use the Learning Disabilities Supported Living Framework Agreement to procure housing support services and review it to ensure that it delivers good quality outcomes and is value for money
- Make best use of vacancies in specialist accommodation through the Council’s Brokerage Team
- Test and promote advances in new technology that enable people to be independent in their home and use technology to stimulate a positive approach to risk planning and risk management
- Work with housing providers to make reasonable adjustments for people with learning disabilities and autism, including sensory environment, accessible web-based services, Easy Read letters and documents and increased staff awareness
How will we know this is working?

- When people are living in the right accommodation that meets their assessed needs and maximises their independence
- We will have substantially fewer residential care home placements, down from about 140 to less than a hundred
- When there is an increase in the number of people in settled accommodation, tenancy accommodation or living in the family home
- More older people with learning disabilities move to extra care sheltered housing
- When we see a range of co-produced housing solutions available to people with learning disabilities develop in response to identified needs. (including shared lives, keyring and other models)
- More people move on to an ordinary tenancy
- More people with learning disabilities own their own home through shared ownership schemes
- When people know what there assistive technology may help them with in the future and how they can access it