

REPORT TO CABINET

Title: **PLANNING FOR AN AGEING POPULATION
SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT**

Date: 29 July 2010

Member Reporting: Councillor Mrs Knight

Contact Officer(s): Philip Hylton, Planning Policy Officer
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Wards affected: All Wards

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1.1 It is clear that there are a number of challenges that must be addressed to ensure that our communities are age-friendly so that in the future people are able to remain in their homes and neighbourhoods should they so wish, and that there will be a range of options for how they will be cared for. This need to address the ageing population has been covered in Government documents and in a Berkshire-wide document.
- 1.1.2 **The Planning for an Ageing Population Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) provides detailed guidance that supports policies in the RBWM Local Plan and in national policy. It will bring forward a requirement for all housing development to be built to Lifetime Homes Standards, a step which is expected to occur at a national level in due course and it will be a material consideration in many planning applications including those for:**
- **Housing development and redevelopment;**
 - **Buildings that will be used by members of the public;**
 - **Office / employment development; and**
 - **Care homes or housing for older people.**
- 1.1.3 This SPD was produced to provide detailed guidance on a number of planning policies within the RBWM Local Plan and the now revoked South East Plan. As such this SPD relies on these. However, it is considered that there are still the relevant links to the Local Plan and it should also be noted that a number of national policy documents further embed the goals set out in this SPD.
- 1.1.4 Upon adoption, the SPD will form part of the Council's Local Development Framework and will be of significant weight in the determination of planning applications.

2. RECOMMENDATION

That the Planning for an Ageing Population Supplementary Planning Document be adopted and that the associated sustainability appraisal and consultation report be approved.

What will be different for residents as a result of this decision?

This SPD will ensure that homes are more adaptable and accessible to people of all ages. This will ensure that a greater amount of the housing stock being produced will be suitable for more of the borough's residents, therefore providing greater choice for people over where they live. It will also improve residents' choice over how and where they are cared for should they need it in their later years.

3. SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 Background

Why is there a need for this Supplementary Planning Document?

- 3.1.1 The population of the Royal Borough is ageing as people are living longer due to improvements in medicine and improved diets and lifestyles. Although people are living longer than in previous generations, the 'extra' years are not necessarily being spent in good health. The 2001 census showed that the Royal Borough was home to 20,532 people who were aged 65 or over. Estimations show that this is set to rise to approximately 26,200 by 2020. If these trends continue there will likely be a significant strain upon adult social care services and there will not be enough residential care spaces to meet the needs of residents.
- 3.1.2 **Therefore it is important to plan ahead now to widen choice to ensure that homes and neighbourhoods are more suitable for use by older people, so that they can remain in their homes for as long as they wish.**
- 3.1.3 In 2008, the Government published *Lifetime Homes, Lifetime Neighbourhoods: A National Strategy for Housing in an Ageing Society*. This document sets out the Government's response for how best to address the challenges that accompany ageing, and outlines plans to ensure that the problems of providing suitable housing and access to the necessary services for older people are achieved.
- 3.1.4 In response to this, the Berkshire authorities commissioned a document which set out a list of recommendations for how these issues should be dealt with when formulating policies. This *Positive Planning for an Ageing Society* document was published in December 2009 and provides a framework for what steps should be taken in Berkshire, to make the area more age-friendly.

What does the Supplementary Planning Document do?

- 3.1.5 The Planning for an Ageing Population SPD takes on the recommendations of these two documents and puts them in the borough context to address the specific issues and opportunities that exist. It has been produced to deal with these issues of ageing in a borough-specific manner. The SPD:

- Assesses a number of issues relating to the ageing population in the borough;
- Provides a range of requirements that must be addressed by development proposals, to build homes to *Lifetime Homes Standards*, making them accessible and adaptable, to ensure that they will continue to be suitable for occupants to remain in, even if their physical or mental wellbeing changes;
- Encourages development to take better account of how older people use the outside environment and to contribute to the development of neighbourhoods that are accessible, exhibit high quality design, and provide a range of services and facilities that are important to residents;
- Highlights what services and facilities are important to residents so as to remain in their neighbourhood; and
- Provides guidance for developers of care homes and retirement housing, to ensure that a more suitable provision is brought forward in the future.

3.1.6 The SPD will encourage planning applications to be accompanied by a checklist that will ensure that all relevant requirements of the SPD will be achieved.

Consultation Results

3.1.7 The SPD was subject to a six-week consultation period between March and April 2010. No responses raised any fundamental issues with the SPD and there was support for many parts of the document. Details of these responses are available in the consultation report which has been placed in the members rooms alongside the SPD. The consultation resulted in a few minor amendments to the document, including:

- Changing guidance for homes to follow national Lifetime Home Standards;
- Removing the requirement for extensions to meet Lifetime Home Standards; and
- Easing the requirement for Lifetime Home Standards in residential subdivision development.

Next Steps

3.1.8 The council will publish the SPD to the website, and make copies available in council receptions for public viewing. Parish councils, respondents to the consultation, and developers and agents on the council's consultation database will be informed of the adoption of this document, and it will be further promoted through pre-application advice.

4. OPTIONS AVAILABLE AND RISK ASSESSMENT

4.1 Options

	Option	Comments	Financial Implications
1.	Do not adopt the Planning for an Ageing Population Supplementary Planning	Not recommended. If this document is not adopted, the accessibility and adaptability of new homes will not be enhanced and may therefore leave a greater number of residents requiring relocation into a care	Revenue: It will lead to more people being unable to remain in their home and therefore needing a place in a care

	Option	Comments	Financial Implications
	Document	home. Failure to adopt this document will also reduce the council's ability to ensure that new development contributes positively to creating pleasant and accessible communities. Furthermore, if this SPD is not adopted there will be less information for developers of accommodation for older people, this could result in less desirable schemes coming forward that will not meet the need of the borough's residents in an appropriate fashion.	facility, with a potential extra burden on the council. There will continue to be a greater cost for the council in adapting homes for residents if they need it Capital: None
2.	Adopt the Planning for an Ageing Population Supplementary Planning Document	Recommended. Adopting this document will give more detail to back up existing local and national planning policy for lifetime homes. It will allow the council to have more control over the types and location of care homes provided. It will also bring positive benefits to existing and future residents through an improved standard of housing, and improvements to communities.	Revenue: Staff time only for training, and securing requirements. Capital: Council developments will need to comply with the SPD requirements where relevant. This may have some financial implications, but would depend upon the nature and scale of scheme.

4.2 Risk assessment

- 4.2.1 The main risk of not adopting this SPD is that a greater number of residents will be unable to remain in their home as they get older, and will need to be cared for in a care home or other specialist accommodation. This will cause the council to incur greater expense in caring for many residents and also when adapting new homes as they will be less ready to take on adaptations. Aside from costing the council significantly more, this will also reduce the choice for older people of where they can live.
- 4.2.2 The main risk in adoption has come as a result of the South East Plan being abolished. As the SPD was produced using policy hooks from both the Local Plan and the South East Plan, there are now fewer links to the Development Plan. However, it is considered that there are adequate links to the Local Plan for all parts of this SPD to continue in existence.

5. CONSULTATIONS CARRIED OUT

- 5.1.1 Members of the council's Older Person's Advisory Forum were consulted on a number of issues which usefully provided some initial evidence for the document. The 29 questionnaire responses provided an insight into where people would

consider living, what type of housing is most attractive to them, and what problem's they experienced in their community.

5.1.2 In depth internal consultation has taken place with a number of different council departments that have relevance in the field. This included the Adult Services Team, Occupational Health, Leisure Services, Development Control, Building Control Consultancy, Housing Policy and Street Care. Outside bodies such as the East Berkshire Primary Care Trust, Thames Valley Police, and some local housing associations were also consulted prior to consulting with the public.

5.1.3 Following this, the SPD was subject to a six week public consultation from March 19th to 30th April. Every reasonable effort was made to engage with the public and also interested parties on this SPD, although the response was limited. The consultation included notifying all those who assisted in prior stages of work, local developers, housing associations, care providers, relevant council forums and other relevant contacts. An audio copy of the document was also produced on request for a visually impaired member of the public.

6. COMMENTS FROM THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL

6.1.1 To be received at the Overview and Scrutiny Panel on 13th September 2010.

7. IMPLICATIONS

7.1.1 The following implications have been addressed where indicated below.

Financial	Legal	Human Rights Act	Planning	Sustainable Development	Diversity & Equality
✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Background Papers:

Lifetime Homes, Lifetime Neighbourhoods: A National Strategy for Housing in an Ageing Society, DCLG 2008.

Making Personalisation a Reality: A Strategy for Adult Care Services, RBWM 2008.

Positive Planning for an Ageing Society: The Berkshire Authorities' response to Lifetime Homes, Lifetime Neighbourhoods, White Young Green Planning, 2009.

Sustainability Appraisal

Consultation Statement