

**Directorate:** Housing and Regeneration

**Service:** Strategic Housing

**Policy / function / activity being reviewed:** Older Persons Housing Strategy 2014 - 2020

**Supporting Directorate Support Officer:**

**Date completed and by whom:** January 2014, Sarah Pickering, Strategy and Policy Officer

**Review date:** January 2015

### Step 1 – Identifying the Purpose / Aims

1. What type of policy, service, activity or function is this?

- Adopting a new strategy for 2014 – 2020

2. What is the aim and purpose of the policy, activity, service or function?

- This strategy sets out the Council's long-term plan to ensure future provision of suitable, high quality housing options for older residents in the borough. A number of other key policies and strategies will support the success of this strategy in the delivery of target outcomes.

3. Outline any proposals being considered.

- This Older Persons Housing Strategy commits the Council to meeting four key strategic objectives.
  - To provide older people with easy-to-access high quality advice on the housing options and support available to them so they are able to make informed decisions about their housing options.
  - To make the best use of existing housing stock designed specifically for older people and adapted general needs properties.
  - To ensure the borough offers a range of suitable, high quality housing options for older people, including specialist housing for those who need extra support.
  - To allow older people to live independently in their homes for as long as they choose or it is safe to do so.

4. Who is the policy, activity, service or function intended to help / benefit / serve?

The objectives have been developed to help / benefit / serve people aged 50 and over in all housing tenures in Dacorum

5. Does the policy, activity, service or function have any specific aims or objectives in relation to equality, social inclusion or community cohesion?

- Objective 3 - By identifying the importance of considering the location of specialist accommodation designed for older people in terms of how close a property is to amenities, local services and support networks, this strategy aims to prevent social isolation and disengagement from the community.
- Objective 4 - Through a commitment to working closely with other agencies and support services that provide support to older residents, this strategy aims to prevent social isolation.

## Step 2 – Considering existing information and what this tells you

6. Summarise any data / research or performance management information about the policy, function or activity that is available.  
This could include equalities monitoring information; surveys; complaints or grievances.

### Data / Information

Dacorum has a population of 144,800, which is 13% of the total population of Hertfordshire. In terms of headcount, Dacorum is the largest of the Hertfordshire districts. There are 71,300 males (49%) and 73,500 females (51%) living in the borough.

Source: Office of National Statistics, Census 2011, published July 2012

Figure 1: Population breakdown by ethnicity

	Dacorum (%)	East of England (%)	England and Wales (%)
White: British	86.0	85.3	80.5
White: Irish	1.3	1.0	0.9
White: Gypsy or Irish Traveller	0.2	0.1	0.1
White: Other White	3.4	4.5	4.4
Mixed: White and Black Caribbean	0.7	0.6	0.8
Mixed: White and Black African	0.3	0.3	0.3
Mixed: White and Asian	0.7	0.6	0.6
Mixed: Other Mixed	0.5	0.5	0.5
Asian/Asian British: Indian	1.6	1.5	2.5
Asian/Asian British: Pakistani	1.4	1.1	2.0
Asian/Asian British: Bangladeshi	0.2	0.6	0.8
Asian/Asian British: Chinese	0.5	0.6	0.7
Asian/Asian British: Other Asian	0.9	1.0	1.5
Black/African/Caribbean/Black British: African	1.4	1.2	1.8
Black/African/Caribbean/Black British: Caribbean	0.5	0.6	1.1
Black/African/Caribbean/Black British: Other Black	0.2	0.2	0.5
Other ethnic group: Arab	0.1	0.2	0.4
Other ethnic group: Any other ethnic group	0.2	0.3	0.6

Source: Office of National Statistics, Census 2011, published December 2012

Figure 2: Population breakdown by religion

	Dacorum (%)	East of England (%)	England and Wales (%)
Christian	58.1	59.7	59.3
Buddhist	0.4	0.4	0.4
Hindu	1.3	0.9	1.5
Jewish	0.5	0.6	0.5
Muslim	2.2	2.5	4.8
Sikh	0.1	0.3	0.8
Other religion	0.4	0.4	0.4
No religion	29.5	27.9	25.1
Religion not stated	7.5	7.3	7.2

Source: Office of National Statistics, Census 2011, published December 2012

There are 59,938 households in the borough.

Figure 3: Household breakdown by tenure

	Dacorum (%)	Hertfordshire (%)	East of England (%)	England and Wales (%)
Owned: Owned outright	29.1	30.0	32.9	30.8
Owned: Owned with a mortgage or loan	35.7	36.8	34.7	32.7
Shared ownership (part owned and part rented)	0.6	0.9	0.7	0.8
Social rented: Rented from council (Local Authority)	17.4	9.2	7.8	9.4
Social rented: Other	4.4	9.0	7.9	8.2
Private rented: Private landlord or letting agency	10.9	12.1	13.3	15.3
Private rented: Other	1.0	1.0	1.4	1.4
Living rent free	0.9	1.0	1.3	1.4

Source: Office of National Statistics, Census 2011, published December 2012

Figure 4: Over 50s population breakdown in Dacorum, Hertfordshire and England

Age band	Percentage of population in Dacorum	Percentage of population in Hertfordshire	Percentage of population in England
50-64	18.87% (27,327)	17.86% (199,344)	18.04% (9,569,364)
65-74	7.81% (11,310)	7.85% (87,590)	8.59% (4,552,283)
75-84	5.66% (8,198)	5.49% (61,248)	5.52% (2,928,118)
85 and over	2.33% (3,375)	2.25% (25,077)	2.22% (1,180,128)

Source: Census 2011 data.

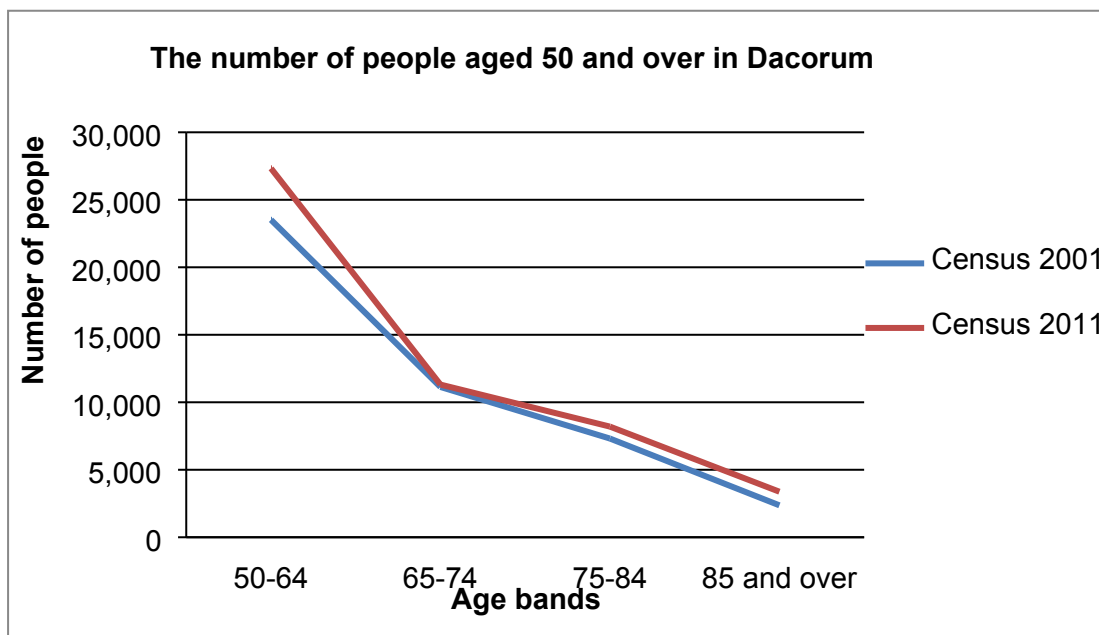
Figure 5: Over 50s population breakdown by gender

Age	Number in Dacorum	Number of males	Number of females
50 – 64	27,327	13,615	13,712
65 – 74	11,310	5,390	5,920
75 – 84	8,198	3,536	4,662
85 and over	3,375	1,205	2,170

Source: Census 2011 data

The number of older residents in the Borough has increased significantly in the last decade.

Figure 6: Over 50s population increase from 2001 to 2011



Source: Census 2011 data.

The number of people aged 65 and over is set to increase by over 18% in the next decade.

Figure 7: Projected over 65s population in the borough

	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030
People aged 65-69	6,000	7,600	7,000	8,000	8,900
People aged 70-74	5,100	5,500	7,000	6,500	7,400
People aged 75-79	4,600	4,600	5,100	6,400	6,000
People aged 80-84	3,600	3,800	4,000	4,400	5,700
People aged 85 and over	3,300	3,900	4,600	5,100	6,300
Total population 65 and over	22,600	25,400	27,700	30,700	34,300

Source: ONS 2009 Mid-Year Population estimates and Projecting Older People's Population Information (POPPI) System Figures are taken from Office for National Statistics (ONS) subnational population projections by sex and quinary age

From October 2011 to January 2014 the Council allocated 357 Sheltered housing properties. 196 of these properties were allocated to females and 161 to males. Only 8 of these properties were allocation to individuals from Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) communities.

Figure 8: A breakdown of sheltered housing properties allocated by age group.

	Number of properties allocated
People aged 50-64	139
People aged 65-74	100
People aged 75-84	75
People aged 85 and over	43

7. Is there any evidence of negative differential impact on any of the following? (Some equality categories may be more relevant than others)

**Age; Disability; Race or ethnicity; Religion or belief / faith communities; Gender and transgender; Sexual orientation**

#### Gender

- There are a greater proportion of women aged 50 and over in Dacorum than males. Data shows a greater proportion of sheltered housing properties are allocation to women.
- Services available to older residents in the borough may be affected by:
  - reluctance among some men to move into environments where there are more women than men, or
  - the impact on housing decisions experienced by women who have lost a long-term partner or spouse and who may be grieving.

#### Age

- This strategy is targeted at those aged 50 and over and promotes positive outcomes for these residents. The Council will draft a younger persons' housing strategy in 2014.
- Providing good quality, desirable and age-appropriate housing for older people is part of the Council's broader housing strategy to make best use of housing stock - freeing family homes and making value-for-money savings from the future adaptation of properties by making their use flexible at the design stage.

#### Ethnicity/race

- Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) communities can face barriers to accessing older persons' accommodation, including cultural and language barriers, which can delay services or decisions

relating to the provision or take-up of services.

#### Religion

- The Council has limited evidence on the possible impact of religion or belief on people's ability to access older person's services and accommodation.

#### Disability

- This strategy promotes positive outcomes for people who are vulnerable due to disability. The strategy acknowledges that providing suitable accommodation with the appropriate adaptations can produce significant quality-of-life outcomes for people with disabilities.

#### Sexual orientation

- The lesbian, gay, transsexual and transgender (LBGT) community may face specific barriers not currently considered, and it may be that more information about this client group is needed.

### Step 3 – Assessing the Impact

8. Is there any evidence of higher or lower take-up of the service, facility or opportunity by any group /community and if so, is there an explanation for this?

- A higher proportion of sheltered properties are allocated to females than males. In part this is due to Dacorum having a greater proportion of females aged 50 and over than males. There may also be an unexplored issue of reluctance among men to live in accommodation they see as predominantly housing women.
- Data shows the number of sheltered properties allocated to BME communities to be extremely low. This may be due to cultural and language barriers.
- The majority of sheltered housing is allocated to individuals aged 60-74. A low proportion of sheltered housing is allocated to households aged 85 and over. This may be because from 85 barriers to moving are much greater, and that moves tend to be preceded by change to health that may result in residential care rather than independent living.

9. Could any of the associated rules, requirements or regulations of the function, activity or policy affect the accessibility of the service/ activity to any groups or communities?

The Council's housing register is currently administered through an online system and increasingly services are becoming digital-by-default.

10. If the impact or effects are adverse for any community or group, can they be defended i.e. in order to provide equality for another community under legislation or policy?

Service delivery through digital-by-default processes has become increasingly common for government services - and in the long-term is considered to be the best way to provide services so that they are accessible to all and produce efficiencies. However, it is acknowledged that we are not yet at a place where we can assume everyone is able to use digital services, and there is evidence that this is more often the case among the older population, especially older age groups from age 75 and above. The Council is committed to a Digital Inclusion Strategy to identify how the Council can support people to get online, and

where people are not, how services can continue to be delivered so that people are not discriminated against.

#### **Step 4 – Dealing with adverse or unlawful impact**

11. What can be done to improve the policy, service, function or any proposals in order to reduce or remove any adverse impact or effects identified?

NB: This section does not seek to replicate the actions that have already been outlined in the strategy action plan 2014-2020, but to add to it.

- Monitor the needs of the different equality groups within the older population to ensure suitable provision of accommodation.
- Monitor the allocation of sheltered housing and ensure this form of accommodation is available to all equality groups.
- Identify reasons, and if necessary look to address, why certain groups are not:
  - Considering their future housing options,
  - Accessing sheltered housing, or
  - Being identified for adaptations in their home.

12. What would be needed to be able to do this? Are the resources available?

- Regular, meaningful analysis of national and local demographic and household data.
- Regular, meaningful analysis of the allocation of sheltered housing.
- Communication with local communities.
- Working closely with specialist agencies providing services to older residents
- Planning of resources to target any groups identified by the analyses as disadvantaged

#### **Step 5 – Consultation and Feedback**

13. Outline your proposals to consult with those affected on proposed changes.

This strategy will be presented to the following groups prior to adoption:

- Tenants and Leaseholders Committee
- Housing and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee
- Cabinet

The strategy objectives were formulated using evidence from a large-scale housing needs survey, with around one thousand residents aged over-50 responding. Additional focus groups in sheltered schemes were used for consultation to gather feedback and inform the draft strategy development.

#### **Step 6 – The decision**

14. What needs to be done?

Adoption of the strategy in February 2014.

### **Step 7 – Monitoring, review and evaluation**

15. What monitoring and review mechanisms are in place or will be developed?

This strategy will be reviewed formally every three years.

### **Step 8 – The service plan**

16. What needs to be included in the Service Development Plan?

The strategy is incorporated into the Housing Service's Service Development Plan

17. Does an Action Plan need to be put together to ensure everything is actioned?

No. The strategy contains an action plan that will drive the service to meet the objectives set. The actions identified by this assessment will be incorporated into the review process.

### **Step 9 – Publishing the Results**

The EqIA will be published on the Council's website; therefore as the author of the document it is your responsibility to ensure that it is written in an understandable way, free from Council jargon.

In order for the EqIA form to be published it must be reviewed and signed off by the relevant Head of Service. It is the service manager's responsibility to ensure that this is done.

Once the form this has been completed an electronic copy should be sent to Anne Stunell / Emma Harvey – Human Resources, ext. 2089 / 2258