

Essex County Council

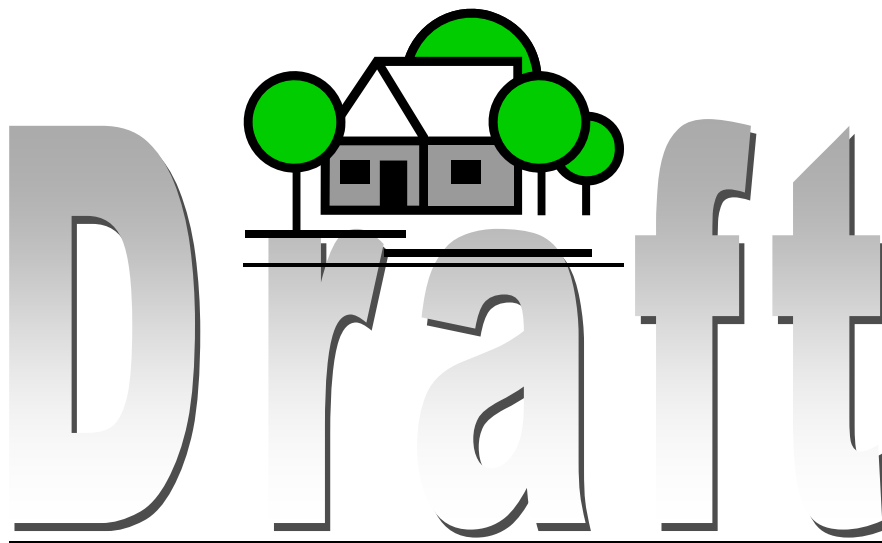
Housing Strategy

For

People with Disabilities

Learning Disabilities and Physical and Sensory
Impairment

2008-2013



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Consultation Housing Strategy for People with Disabilities-2008/2013

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

People with disabilities are amongst the most socially excluded and vulnerable groups in society today. Very few have jobs, live in their own home or have any real choice over who cares for them.

People with learning disabilities and physical and sensory impairment have the right to be full members of the society in which they live. This means that they should be able to choose where they live and what they do to be as independent as they want to be.

It will require partnership working from all organisations and agencies: housing, health and social care to ensure we enable people with learning disabilities and to ensure they achieve their aims in terms of independence.

The first Countywide Housing Strategy for people with learning disabilities in Essex was introduced in 2002. It focused on the need for effective partnership working across the County to deliver a range of housing options and aimed to improve access into housing linked with support to enable people with a Learning Disability to maximise their independence within our communities.

The production of this Strategy, which refreshes the 2002 Strategy and now includes people with a physical and/or sensory impairment is in accordance with the direction set out by Valuing People and Essex Learning Disability Partnership Board.

This Strategy builds on the previous Housing Strategy with a focus on finding innovative ways of providing more people with learning disabilities and physical and sensory impairment a home of their choice. We want to develop high quality individualised services – a wide range of housing and support options for people with learning disabilities over the next 5 years. This Strategy includes an implementation plan to show how we intend to deliver diverse housing and support options.

The current gap between supply and demand is so large, that unless action is taken now to increase the supply and choice of accommodation for people with learning disabilities over the coming years, more placements in crisis accommodation will be required, and the cycle of placing people in residential care out of Essex will continue.

We face many challenges in turning this strategy into reality; improving access into affordable accommodation, ensuring that sufficient new developments are commissioned, ensuring that voids are properly managed, to meet current and future demands for supported housing, ensuring that communication is improved between agencies and providing adequate information for people to make informed choices about where they will live, who they will live with and what support they require.

People with learning disabilities as well as physical and sensory impairments now have greater expectations and aspirations than they had historically to live

a normal life in the community, and this is frequently supported by their families. In order to help them to achieve their aspirations we need to listen to them, give them opportunities for a wider range of housing options, provide better information and work together to maximise their ability to choose what is right for them. Our plan is to be able to offer a range of housing options and support so that people with disabilities can have a real choice about where they live.

“A stable and a decent home is key to sustaining an individual’s ability to maintain their home and take part in the community” (Supporting People Strategy 2005-2010).

The current range of supported accommodation is very limited. There has been limited development of and growth in housing and support options for people with learning disabilities. There is a lack of diversity of supply and therefore a limited range of choice of housing and support options. Much of the supported housing is shared accommodation.

There has been an over reliance on residential care as the default option for people not living with their families.

The strategy sets out a ‘typology’ of the range of different housing and support options that are possible and exist in many other parts of the country. These include:

Renting options

Home ownership options

Family and third party investment in housing

Adult placement and Homeshare

A wide range of support options including floating support, keying type networks of support, individualised support services, community support volunteers, circles of support and assistive technology.

The strategy advocates using the widest range of funding streams, capital and revenue, to broaden choice of housing. In relation to revenue expenditure, widening access to housing based services rather than relying on residential care requires a change on funding strategy for Adult Social Care, by reducing spend on residential care to invest in housing based alternatives.

An extensive set of recommended actions are proposed including development of the following options in order to widen housing choices:

- Housing adapted for wheelchair accessibility.
- Self contained housing, in the social and private rented sectors.
- Small ‘clusters’ of self contained flats, possibly within larger developments
- Tenancy support networks.
- Home ownership options.
- Expansion of the adult placement service.
- Use of family home and resources.

SECTION 1

1. INTRODUCTION

The White Paper “Valuing People”, gave a direction of travel in 2001 by bringing change, choice and greater inclusion for people with learning disabilities. On that basis the first Essex Learning Disability Housing Strategy was developed for 2003-2008 through the Learning Disabilities Partnership Board which is a strategic co-ordination body and includes people with learning disabilities, carers, housing providers, Social Services, Health, the private and voluntary sector.

Choice of Accommodation, the “where and how”, is crucial for health, well-being and quality of life for every person. However we do recognise the difficulties that people with learning disabilities face in the housing market. They want and expect the same opportunities as the rest of the population. This includes access to a range of accommodation options, to live more independently in the community and if necessary be supported to achieve this.

It is not just the availability of housing, but suitable housing that is an issue for people with physical and sensory impairment. Housing that is accessible for people with physical and sensory impairment.

In 1991 housing experts developed the concept of lifetime homes that would meet the needs of all including people with disabilities which would apply to all new built homes. 16 features have been developed to ensure that a new house or flat will meet the needs of most households. One of the features for example is wheelchair accessibility.

On the subject of housing the Government’s objective is to enable people with disabilities and their families to have greater choice and control over where and how they live. This means choosing the town they want to live in, the sort of housing they want, who they like to live with and the type of support that meets their needs.

For this Housing Strategy to accomplish the aspirations of expanding choice in accommodation and support for people with disabilities, partnership work between local housing authorities, social services, health and other local agencies is essential.

Only when the view is changed that not only Social Care is responsible for developing and providing accommodation for people with disabilities, can we succeed in our aim of expanding choice and greater control over where and how people with a disability live.

This strategy is countywide and aims to put in place plans to pursue sustained development of housing, care and support in each locality over the next 5 years and beyond. This strategy recognises the importance of links with the regional and sub-regional housing strategies and the Five Year supporting People Strategy in achieving our visions.

This Strategy is for a period of five years and will be reviewed and updated annually.

The purpose of this strategy is:

- To develop accommodation that people with disabilities want and which is accessible to them
- To set out clear routes to achieving our vision
- To develop an implementation plan to deliver a wide range of housing and support options over the next 5 years.

It is fundamental to the success of this strategy that people with disabilities and their carers are fully informed about the plan and have the opportunity to input their views.

2. VISION

- Enable people with learning disabilities and physical and sensory impairment to have the same choice and options about where and how they live as the rest of the population:

- Maximum choice of housing options
- Ensure that support is provided to enable people with disabilities to access and maintain independent homes;
- To work in partnership with the local authorities, health and other agencies

3. ASPIRATION

- All people with disabilities will have the same choices and options as the rest of the population in terms of where and how they live.

SECTION 2

4. BACKGROUND

Historically, accommodation for adults with learning disabilities was focussed on in-patient facilities, registered care homes or people living with their family.

There were large long stay institutions as part of NHS provision, accommodating over 1,000 people in each at their peak. In Essex, these services were concentrated at South Ockendon in Thurrock, Turner Village and Essex Hall Hospitals in Colchester, Bridge Hospital in Witham and Little Highwoods in Brentwood.

During the 1980s there was an ambitious programme of hospital closures, and by 1990 only Turner Village, Bridge and Little Highwoods remained. There were also numerous other large hostel type facilities accommodating over 40 people. Four of the largest were concentrated in Tendring and accommodated over 200 people. All of these have now been closed.

To identify the numbers of people with learning disabilities that require accommodation over the next 5 years housing needs assessments have been undertaken as well as data from TABBS being incorporated.

Essex Strategic Reserve. Essex has had on-going success in securing new developments for adults with learning disability through the Essex Strategic Reserve Programme (ESR), a partnership programme including Essex County Council, the 12 local authorities and the Housing Corporation. Other partnerships resulted in the creation of 169 units of accommodation for people with learning disability in 22 different locations of which 8 are currently in development. Changes to the way in which supported housing is commissioned through the Housing Corporation's sub-regions have brought this programme to an end. The joint-commissioning ethos between ECC and the districts but Essex continues with active engagement in the development of new supported housing in the County. It is envisaged that further schemes will be developed in line with the AH&CW Accommodation Strategy and the Property Strategy

4.1. Strategic context

4.1.1 NHS Accommodation Re- Provision

While People with learning disabilities may need to be admitted to hospital like the rest of the population on a short term basis, it is not right for them to live in NHS accommodations on a long term basis. Those people with learning disabilities currently living in NHS accommodations need to be enabled to live in the community.

Following the comprehensive programme of closure for long stay hospitals in Essex nearly 200 people now live independently in their own homes.

The White Paper "Our Care, Our Health, Our Say" published in 2006 builds on and reinforces the target that was set in 'Valuing People, A Strategy for People with a Learning Disability for the 21st Century', published in 2001. 'Our Health, Our Care, Our Say' states that any NHS Campus for people with a Learning Disability should be closed by 2010 and that alternative local services must be developed as necessary to allow this to happen.

As at October 2007 there are 38 people still living on NHS Campus Sites as at October 2007. However these people will be moving on to either supported living or specialist residential care by March 2010. It is hoped that 18 service users who are delayed discharges, or inpatients under section of the Mental Health Act and not receiving active treatment, will be discharged by 2010.

4.1.2. Essex County Council Hostel Re-Provision

Essex County Council is currently reviewing the ability of its remaining hostels Magdalen Close, Berecroft, Shernbroke and Bridgemarsh, to meet the changing needs of residents, as well as meeting the changing environmental standards required by legislation. It is anticipated that there will be changes to these services during the life of this strategy.

Since the publication of the last Strategy, two hostels, Pyefleet Lodge and Mellow Purgess, have closed and Nether Priors is in the process of being redeveloped in partnership with Colne Housing.

This strategy and the hostel review will be in line with 'Valuing People' and are designed to achieve the aim of giving people with learning disabilities the same opportunities as the rest of society by providing the right accommodation to meet their needs and the appropriate support.

For some however, registered care has been the only option available, and while it has suited some people, it is not the appropriate choice for everyone. Essex County Council will review those people that are currently living in residential care with the aim of moving those which are no longer suited for residential care into alternative accommodation.

The aim is for 200 people with a learning disability to move from residential care into the community by 2013.

4.1.3. Priority Groups

It is proposed that the following groups to receive some priority in the planning process for accommodation:

- Young people in transition – young people with learning disabilities reaching the age of adulthood. Supported accommodation needs to be identified as an alternative to residential care or out of county placement
- Older Carers – Older Carers are those aged 65 and over. There is a need to plan alternative accommodation for those people with disabilities living with older carers before a crisis occurs through illness or death of the carer.
- The life expectancy for people with disabilities has increased and many will outlive their parents. This means that it is important to expand the availability of accommodation options for those living with older carers.

- There is also an implication that living with older carers increases the need for respite.
- Move on from residential care – A high number of people with learning disabilities currently living in residential care do not require this type of accommodation and would benefit from a more independent type of accommodation. It is our aspiration to move 200 people with learning disabilities currently in residential care in to the community in to supported accommodations.
- People living on NHS Campus Sites – There are currently still 38 people with learning disabilities living on NHS Campus Sites. In partnership with the PCT it is anticipated that these people will be moving into supported accommodation within the next 3 years

5. LINKS TO OTHER STRATGIES

There are a number of other documents and pieces of work which have strong links with this strategy. They have to be taken into account to ensure that there is consistency and efficiency in progressing each activity.

5.1 Essex County Council

- The Way Ahead Best Value Review of Adult Service Provision for People with Learning Disability.
- Person Centred Planning Implementation Plan. (This is where the person with the learning disability is put at the centre of all decisions affecting their lives, is a countywide priority. This strategy endorses this approach when identifying the housing needs and aspirations of these people)
- Best Value Review of Learning Disability Services.
- Best Value Review of Transport Services.
- Best Value Review of Procurement Services.
- Workforce Plan. (Partnership Board strategy)
- Essex Quality Framework fro People with a Learning Disability
- Asset Management Best Value Review.
- Care and Health Review of Arrangements for Services for People with a Learning Disability
- Framing the Future (Cabinet Paper 2007)

- Introduction of Self Directed Support (a shift from a model of giving people services to one of assisting individuals to determine their own solutions from a more responsive market place)
- Essex Supporting People Strategy 2005- 2010. This strategy links housing with support to enable people to successful remain in their home and move towards more independence in their lives. The link between housing and support is a strong focus within this strategy and the links with the SP team needs to be fostered to ensure success
- Essex Telecare Strategy

5.2 Housing Strategies:

- Communities and Local Government - Homes for the future: more affordable, more sustainable (Green Paper) 2007
- Communities and Local Government - Strong & Prosperous Communities (2006)
- Sustainable Communities: Homes for all (2005). This document is government housing policy. It sets out the action the government will take over the next five years to offer everyone the opportunity of a decent home at a price they can afford.
- Housing Corporation Investing in Independence, Housing for Vulnerable People strategy 2007.
- The Regional Housing Strategy for the East of England 2005 – 2010, identified a continuing need to expand the housing options available for people with a learning disability. There should be a range of accommodation available to cover the diverse needs of this group and the need to look at more innovative models of housing as well as group homes, for example, cluster units, using assistive technology, remodelling of sheltered housing or sharing sheltered provision with the elderly (double usage).
- Housing Strategies of local District/Borough Council's
- Sub-regional Housing Strategies:
 - London Commuter Belt
 - Thames Gateway
 - Greater Haven Gateway

SECTION 3

6. CURRENT POPULATION PROFILE

Sources of information about people with learning disability in Essex:

Information for people with physical and sensory impairment will be inserted

1. The **TABBS** (Thurrock, Basildon and Brentwood) system which voluntarily capture data on all people with learning disabilities living in Essex.
2. The **SWIFT** system which covers Essex County Council service users.
3. **NHS systems** held by the two NHS Trusts (West Essex and South Essex PCT) who lead for health on people with learning disabilities.
4. **GP lists** – GP's have to create patient lists identifying people with Learning Disabilities.

The information used in this report to provide information specific to people with learning disability is based on TABBS data, and is the reported position at July 2007. However, there are a number of points to be noted about the TABBS information:

1. Data that is available for North Essex from the County Council and NHS provider indicates that the numbers of people known to statutory services is very high, and is in excess of the planning norms of 3-4 people with a learning disability per 1,000 population.
2. Because registration with TABBS is voluntary, the TABBS data should be seen as a minimum level, it is clear that there are people with a learning disability who are not known to TABBS or indeed to any of the statutory authorities.
3. The TABBS assessment of support needs and housing needs is based on interviews/forms completed by carers, service users or support staff. This may be different from assessed need.

Accurate data collection is one of the objectives of this strategy i.e. trying to pull together all of the information held by different agencies. The statistics used should therefore give an idea of the scale and profile of people with learning disabilities within Essex, but are not intended to be an exhaustive, accurate list. The information shown below is drawn from different sources, or documents drafted at different times. It is therefore not always consistent!

In July 2007 there were 6,059 people with a learning disability known to TABBS living in Essex (including Southend and Thurrock).

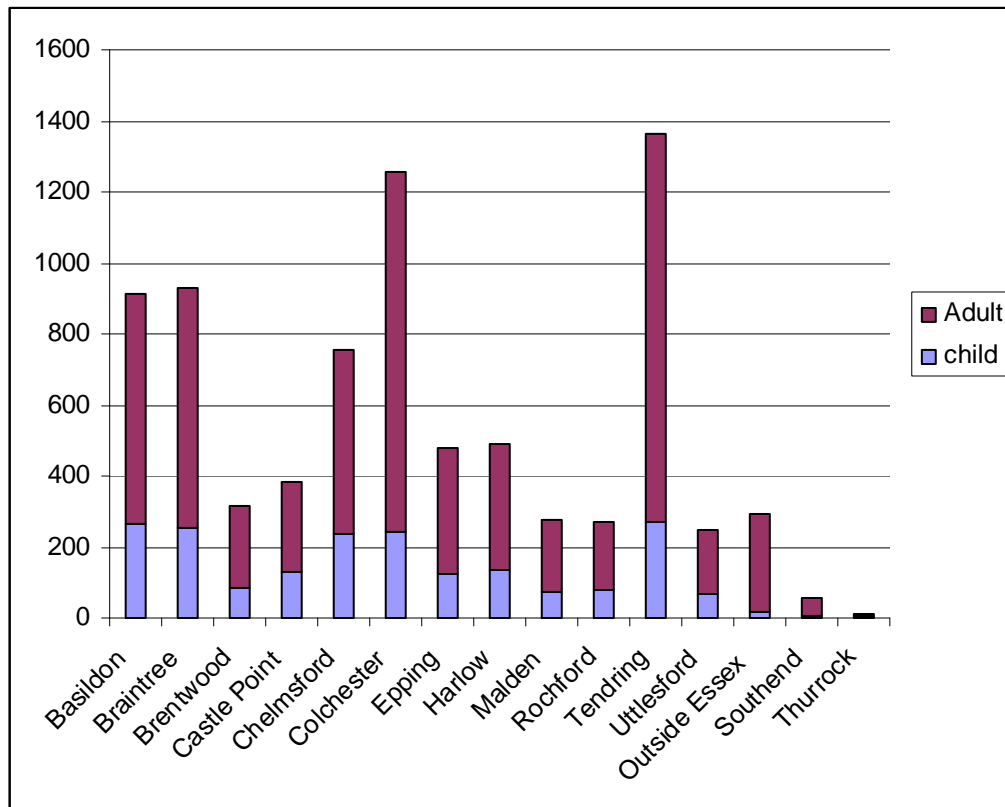
The groups of people identified from the statistics can be categorised as follows:

- Young people going through transition
- Adults living with older carers
- Older people with learning disabilities
- People wanting to move on from the family home
- People living in registered care
- People with physical and sensory impairment

6.1 Where in Essex do people with a learning disability live?

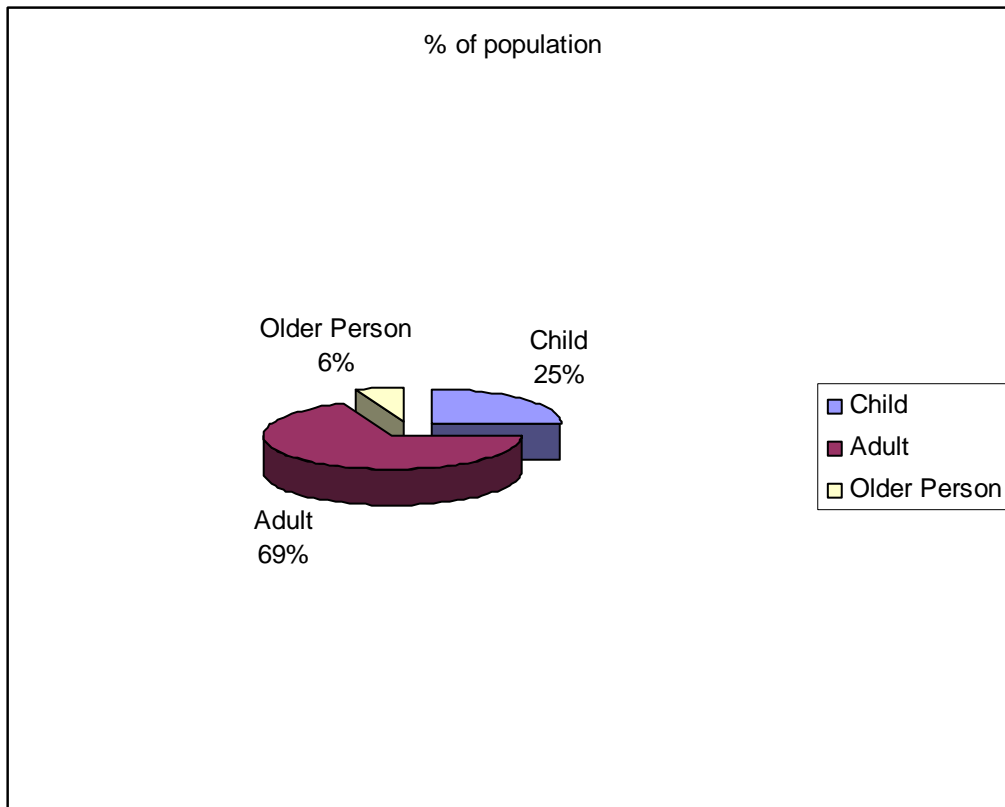
The largest percentage of people with learning disability was found to be residing in Basildon, Braintree, Colchester and Tendring. (See figure 6.1.) A sample of the population showed that 25% were children (to 18 years), 69% were adults (18-65 years) and 6% were older people (65+). (Figure 6.2.)

Figure 6.1.



Source: TABBS

Essex Population profile (Figure 6.2.)



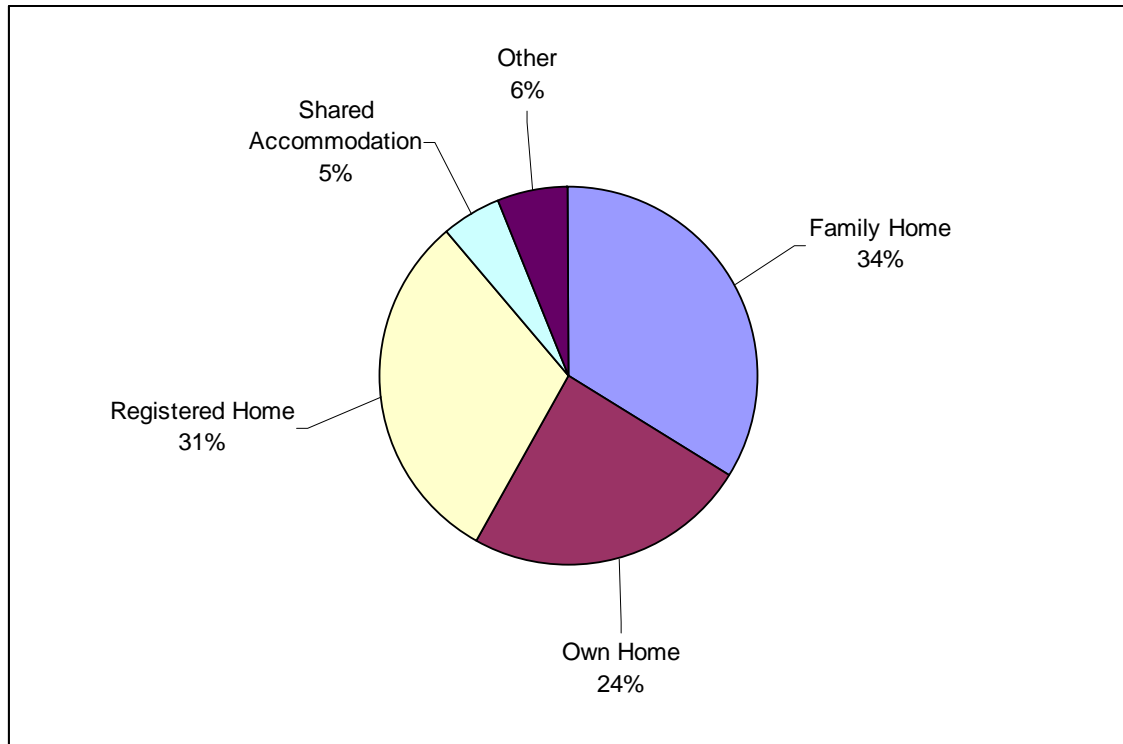
Source: TABBS

The largest percentage is adults with learning disabilities with the smallest percentage currently being older people with learning disabilities. Looking to the future the large percentage of adults will shift to older people with learning disabilities.

6.2 Where people live now and support required

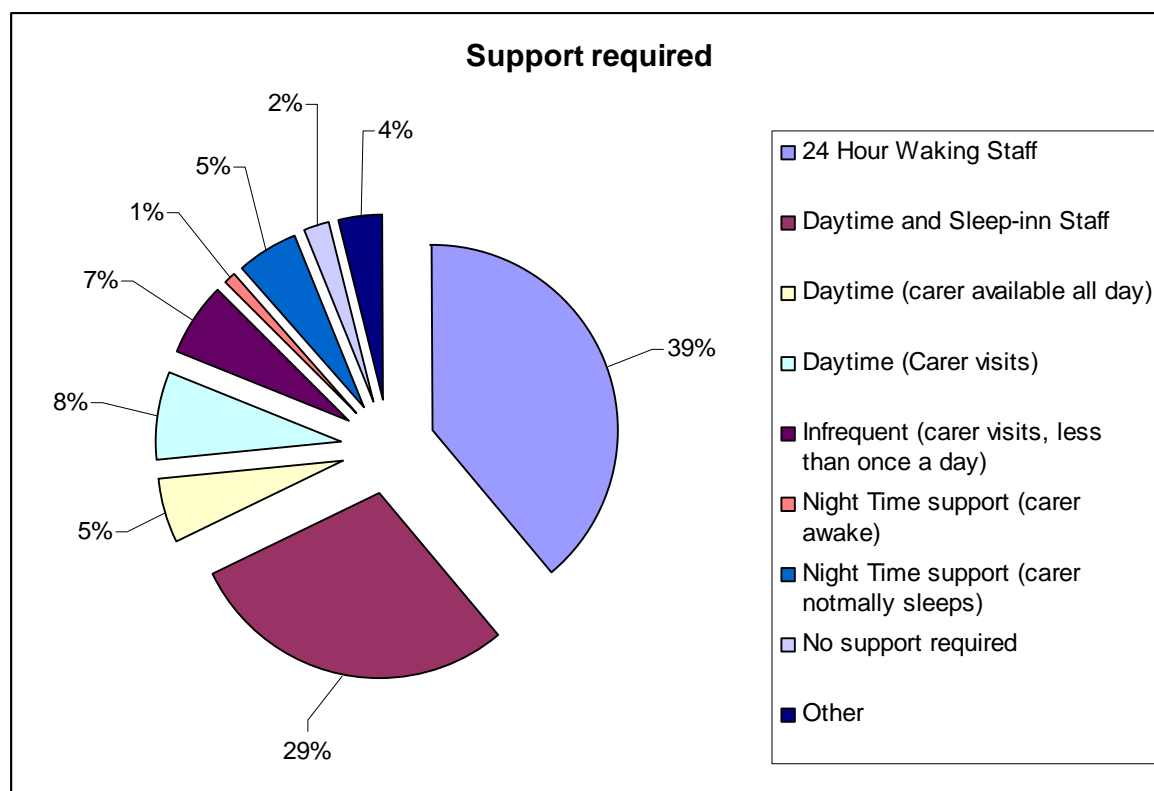
The chart below shows the type of accommodation setting used by the people registered with TABBS. 34% were living in the family home, 24% in their own home, 31% in a registered home, 5% in shared accommodation and 6% other. (Figure 6.3.)

Figure 6.3.



Source: TABBS

Type of support required based on service user and carer views (Figure 6.4.)



Source: TABBS

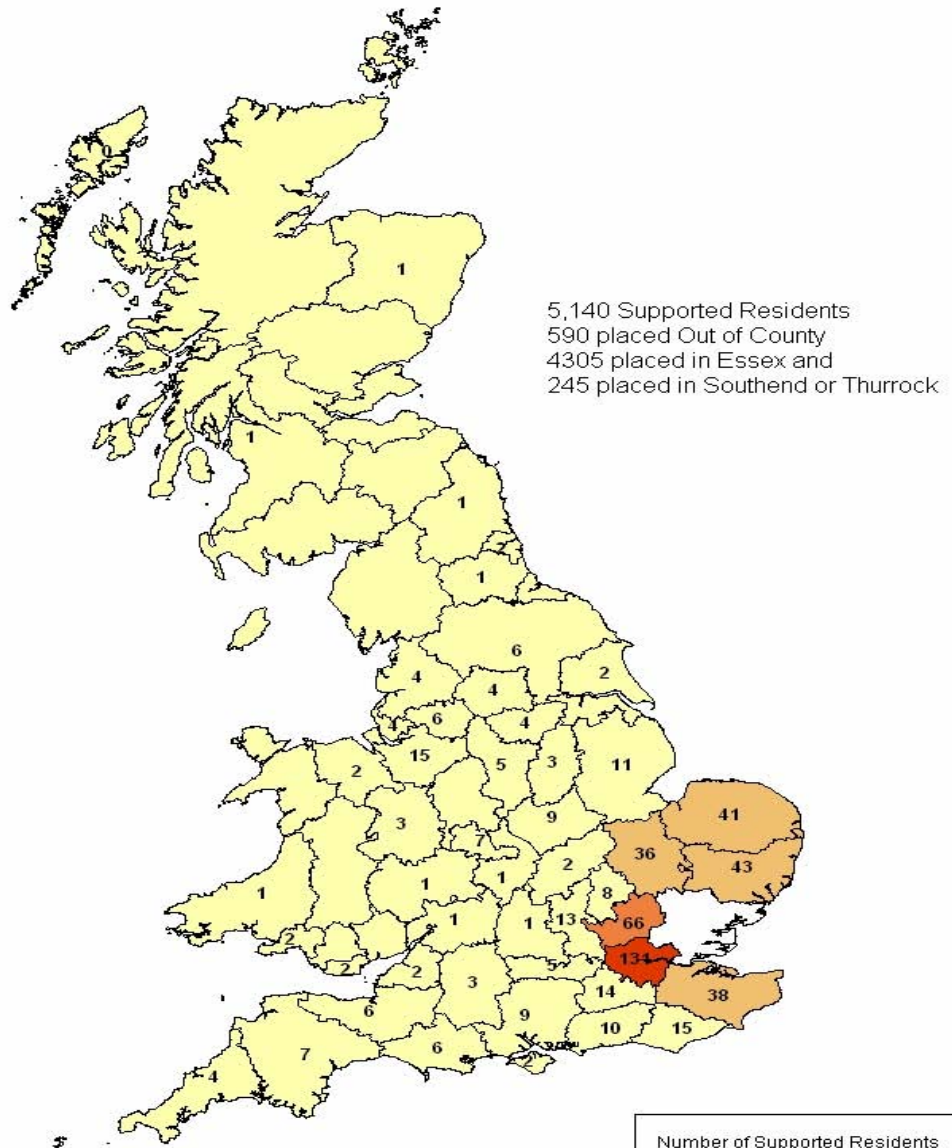
The figure shows that 39% of people with learning disabilities need 24 hour support, 29% require daytime support with a support worker sleeping in, followed by support worker visits during the day with 8%. The smallest percentage requires night support with the carer being awake (1%).

Essex County Council Social Services have 3700 adults with learning disabilities on their SWIFT register which shows an increase of 372 people since the last strategy 1293 of these people are living in their own tenancy with community support arrangements. A further 920 are currently living in residential care. 449 of these people in the locality from where they originate. 225 people live in residential homes in Essex, but outside the locality from which they originate. 183 people live in residential homes outside Essex. 66 people have no known originating locality.

Since the last strategy a number of people living in residential homes outside Essex have returned to Essex, which has reduced the placement outside of Essex from 997 to 920, a reduction of 77 people.

The distribution of places where people live outside Essex is shown on the map below .

**Essex Supported Residents in Residential and Nursing Care Placed Out of County
Excluding Section 28a and Full Costers as at 31 March 07**



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0 to 33	(58)
33 to 66	(4)
66 to 99	(1)
99 to 131	(1)

Source: Informatics

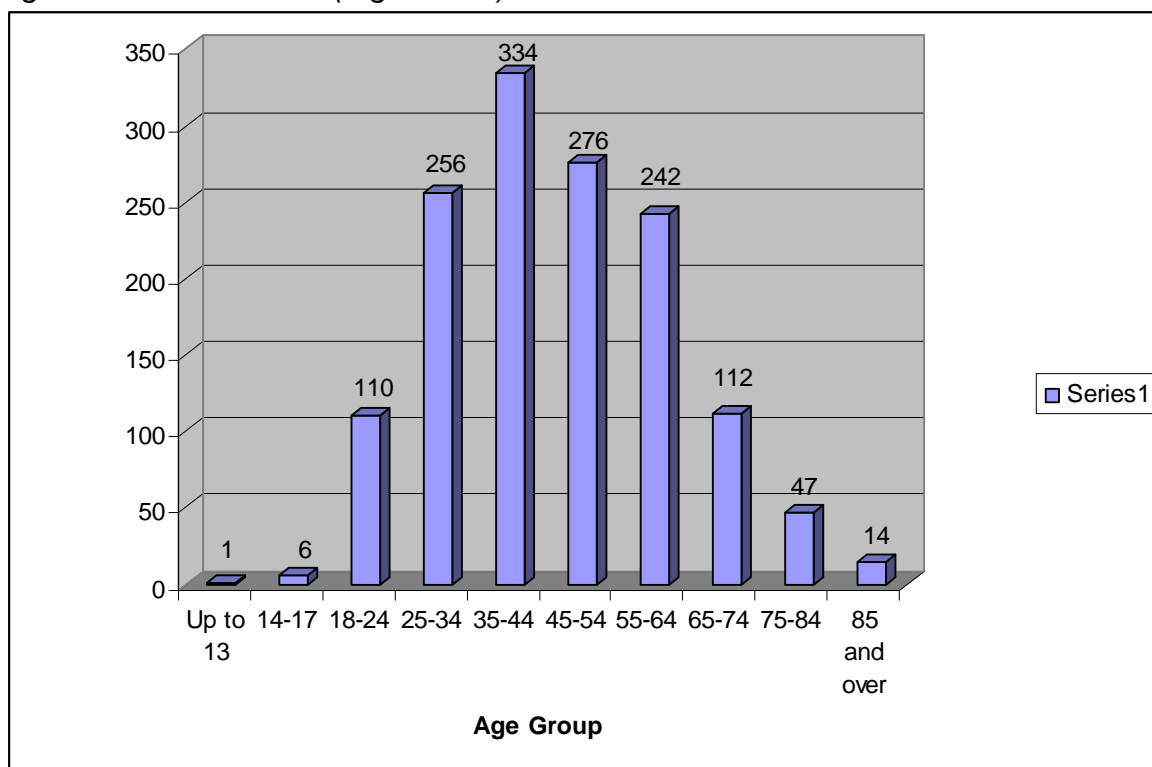
The highest number of adults with learning disabilities living in residential care was those in the 35-44 year age band. (Figure 6.5.)

This is due to the historic way in which services were planned with people traditionally placed in either long stay hospitals or residential care.

Today people with learning disabilities are a different population from the past – today support for people with learning disabilities is not directed towards residential care but independent living.

It is important that these people are enabled to live more independently if they wish to.

Age Profile Residential (Figure 6.5.)



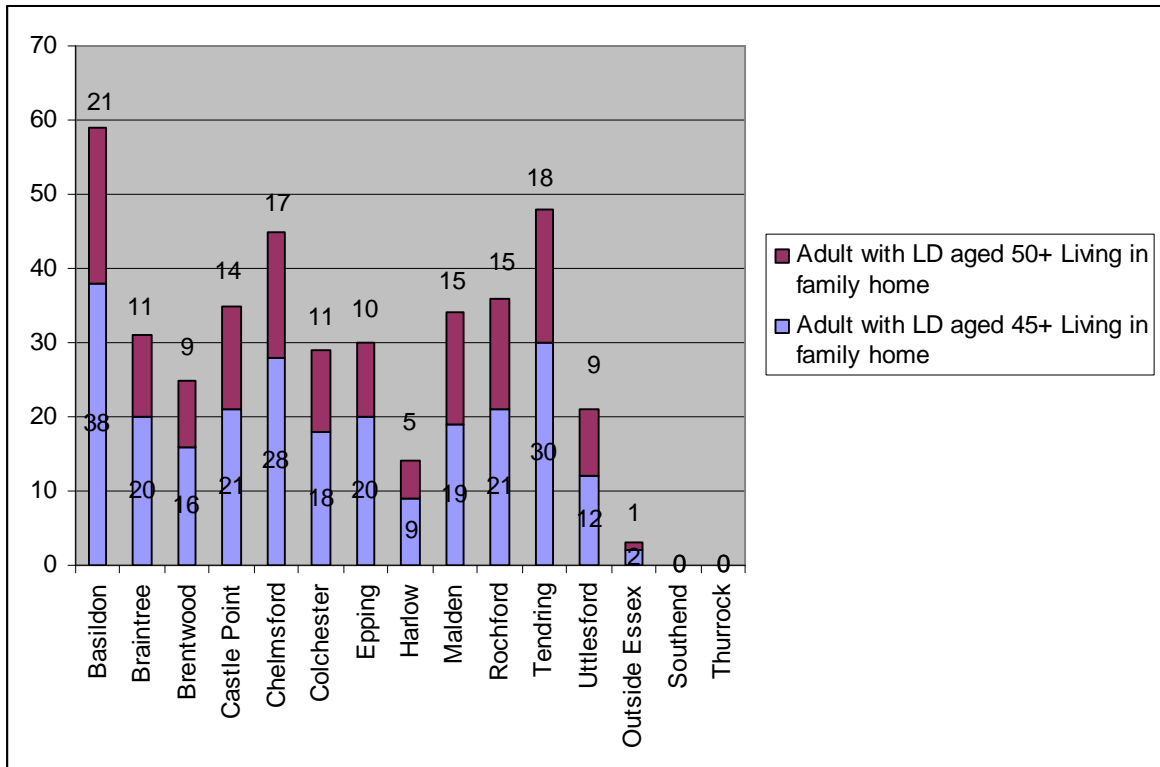
Source: TABBS

6.3. The impact of age

The chart below (Figure 6.6.) shows the number of people with learning disabilities living with older carers in each locality. This shows that there are 254 adults with learning disabilities aged over 45 years living in the family home and 156 are aged over 50 years. The actual age of their carers is not yet recorded; however, it can be assumed that they will be generally over 65 years of age.

A research project, undertaken by the University of Lancaster on forecasting future need/demand for supports for adults with learning disabilities shows that by the year 2011 there will be a 17% increase in the adult population aged 60 and over.

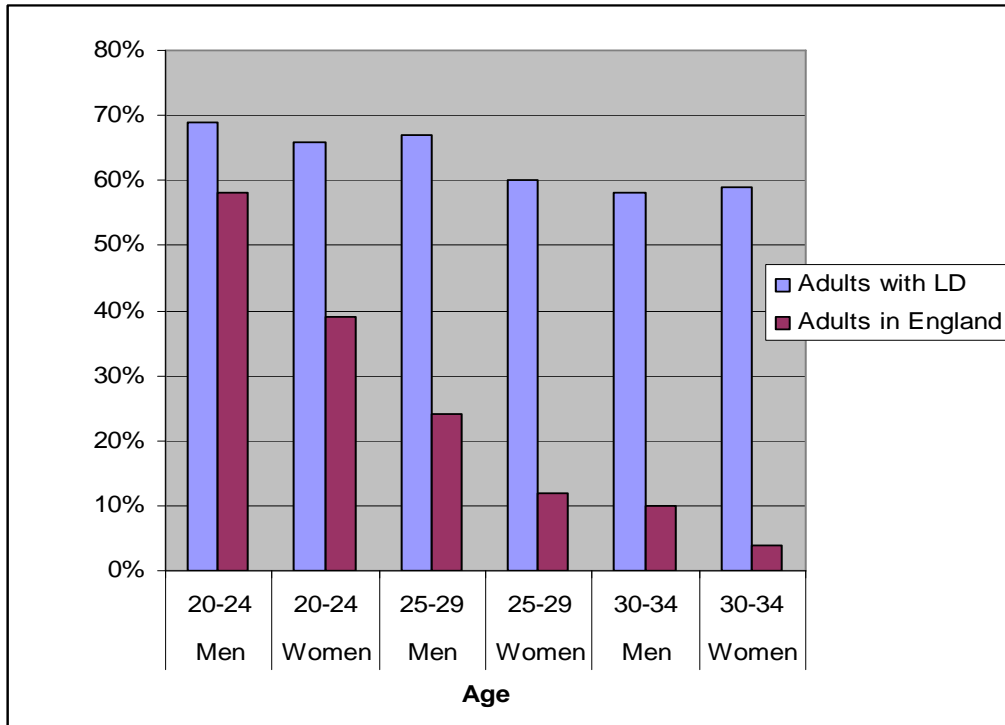
Figure 6.6.



Source: TABBS

A National Survey carried out by the University of Lancashire on Adults with learning disabilities shows the percentage of men and women with learning disabilities living with their parents in comparison to the general population of adults in England. (Figure 6.7). The figures below highlight that one in five (20%) were living with parents 65 or older and nearly one in ten (9%) were living with parents that were 75 or older. The chart illustrates the large inequality of people with learning disabilities in comparison to the general population. Unless we address the situation with innovative solutions, the gap will grow larger.

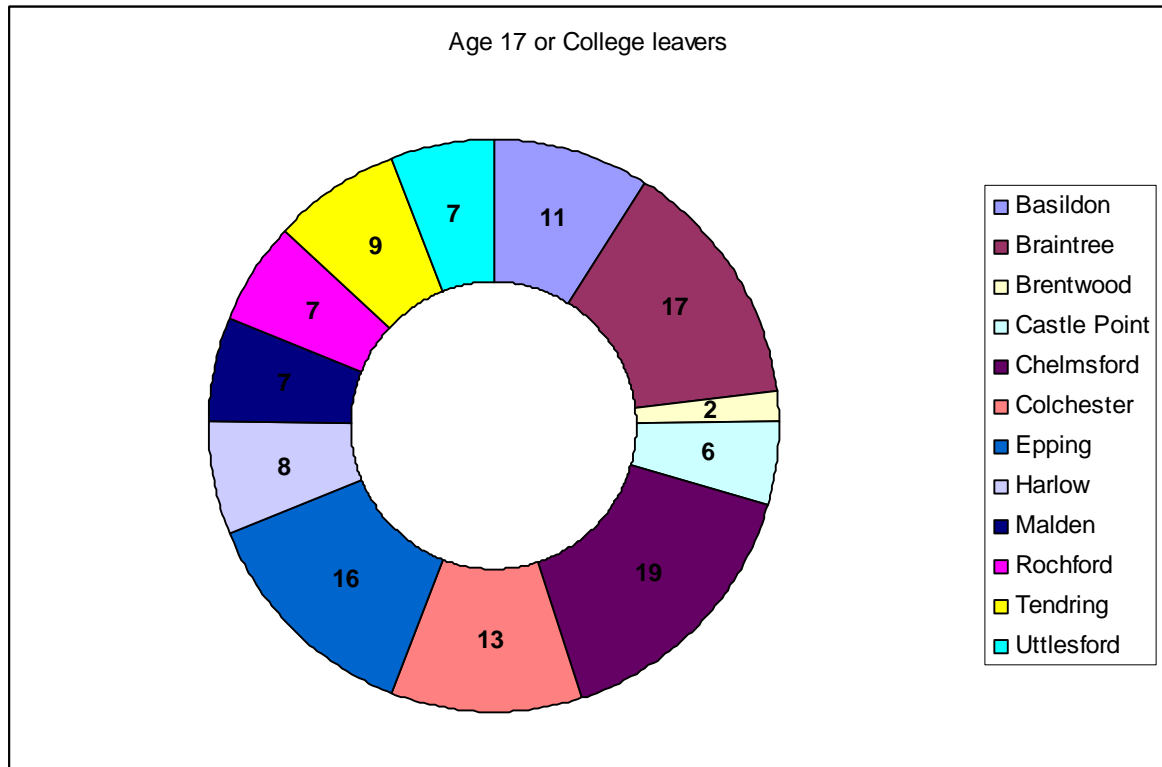
Figure 6.7.



Source National Survey "Adults with Learning Disabilities" 2003/4

There are currently 122 young people with learning disabilities across Essex reaching the point of undergoing or approaching the age of transition that are known to TABBS. (Figure 6.8.)

Figure 6.8.

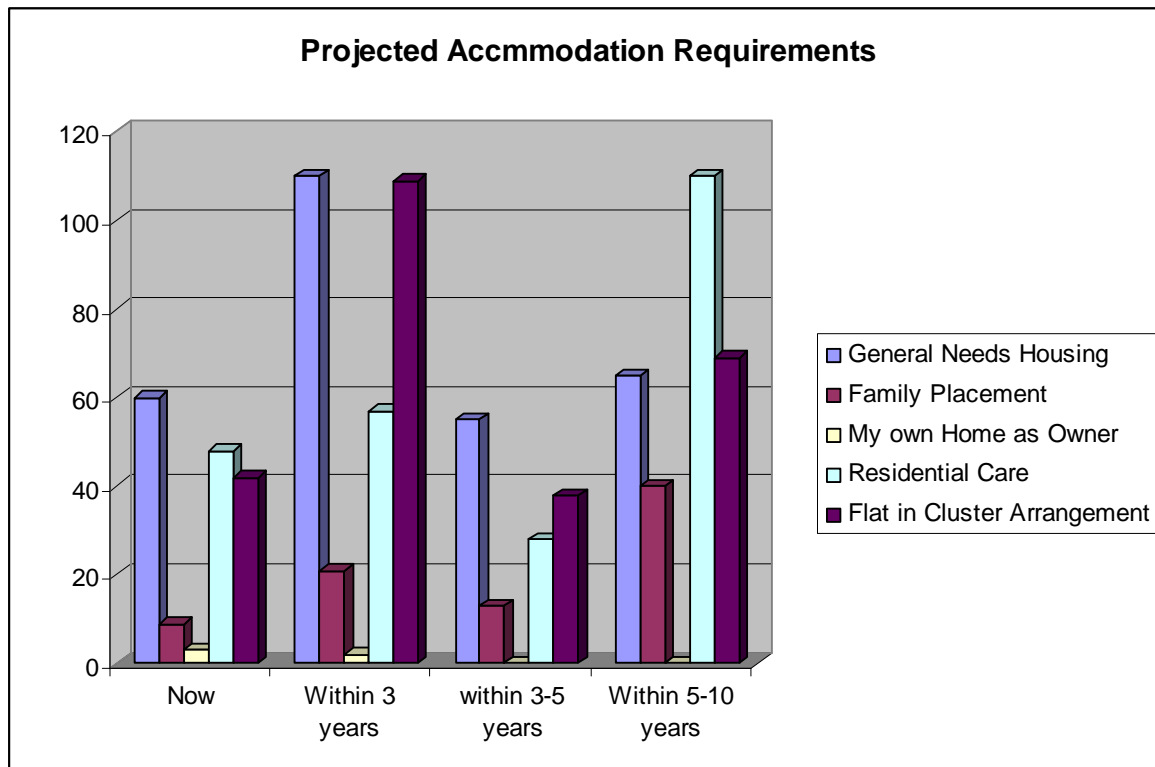


Source: TABBS

6.4. Projected Housing Demand

An exercise was carried out in May 2007 to establish anticipated accommodation needs for people registered with TABBS i.e. what they believed they would need and when. This gives an idea of the range of housing people will be looking for over the next 5 years – 10 years. It shows that the majority of people with a learning disability (34%) prefer to be living in general housing. (Figure 6.9.)

Figure 6.9.



The above information demonstrates a range of different age groups that will be requiring accommodation and support over the coming years with the largest requirement for supported housing within the next 3 years for Adult Family Placement and General Needs Housing.

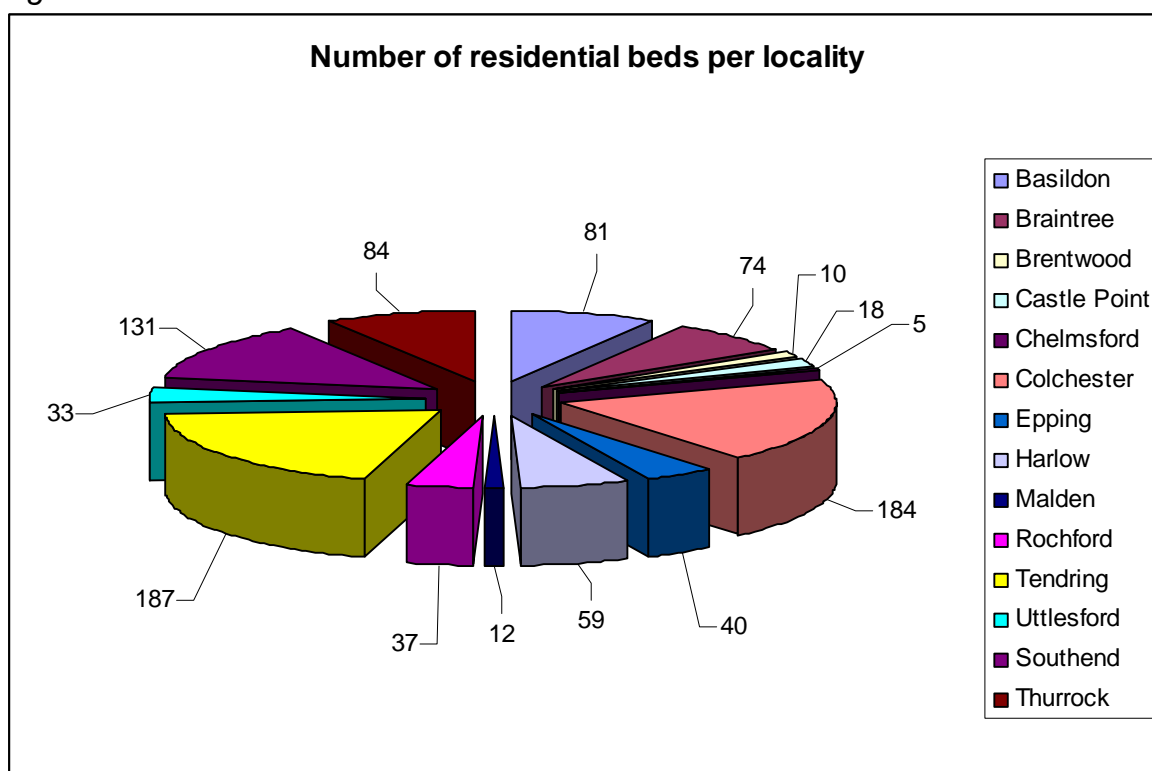
7. SUPPLY

The supply of registered care home places within Essex should be sufficient in volume to meet the future requirements, although it may be necessary to assist providers to develop specialist skills to support those with particular needs. However, not all localities have registered care provision within their boundary.

A breakdown of data which shows the number of residential beds per locality including Southend and Thurrock is shown below. (Figure 7.1.)

According to the Demand Model that Care and Health produced for Essex County Council, there is an over provision of standard residential care in Essex but lack of specialist provision for challenging behaviour, Autism, Epilepsy, Dementia and Sensory Impairment.. We need to re-focus current provision to meet the needs of these people in the future to avoid out of County placements.

Figure 7.1.



The supply of shared housing has increased significantly over the last three years as a result of the hospital closure programme. The creation of vacancies within these properties will need to be closely monitored, so that they remain accessible to people with learning disability. The intention is to create a central nominations point to monitor voids and to allocate them quickly.

As stated in Section 3, ECC's aspiration is to bring 200 people with learning disabilities out of residential care.

This means in order to achieve our aspiration we need to assess and move 40 people from residential care into the supported accommodation into the community per year until 2013.

A future vision is for more people with a learning disability to become home owners through Shared Ownership.

At the same time Registered Social Landlords need to look at purchasing more properties that can be accessed by people with learning disabilities.

The Essex Supporting People Strategy 2005 - 10 shows the supply of Supported Housing within Essex for people with different support needs. This shows that there are currently 12,772 units of supported housing accommodation in Essex known to the SP Teams, of which only 673 are for people with Learning Disabilities.

SP to provide info by district level

From the numbers of beds available in registered care, we can see that there is a minimum of 955 registered care bed spaces in Essex for people with learning disabilities. All of the above show that provision currently available could provide for only 45% of the known population of adults with a learning disability.

If we acknowledge that a proportion of that accommodation is currently used by people placed from outside Essex, the available resource supports only 12 % of the known adult population. The consequence of this is that people with learning disabilities are placed out of county and a significant burden is placed on families to continue to accommodate people with learning disabilities long after the time when the person might have anticipated leaving the family home.

SECTION 4

8. ACCOMMODATION OPTIONS

Essex, as with all locations, has a mix of accommodation provision, including a high percentage of home ownership, local authority and housing association stock and privately rented accommodation. Of the 12 Local Authorities, a number are in the process of or have already transferred their stock to Registered Social Landlords (Malden, Chelmsford, Braintree, Castle Point and Rochford) or created an Arms Length Management Organisation (Colchester, Basildon)

The way vacancies are allocated in the Local Authorities Housing stock is changing. By 2010 all Local Authorities will have introduced Choice Based Lettings, which changes the traditional way of allocating housing via the waiting list.

An important factor in providing accommodation is good communication with the Districts/Borough Councils. Projected Housing requirements should be communicated on a regular basis to the local authorities.

Not everybody with a learning disability is on the housing register of their Local Authority. Everybody needs seeking housing needs to have an application for social housing with the Local Authority.

Around the County house prices have continued to increase over the past few years, with significant increases occurring in the commuter towns. For example Chelmsford has seen the average price of a house rise by more than 50% over the last 3 years, which makes home ownership more and more difficult for people on low to average incomes.

House prices are different in each District due to higher demand and subsequently higher prices.

8.1. Housing and Support Options

8.1.1 Types of housing and support

The fundamental component of supported living considers the values of empowerment, choice and inclusion.

TYPE	SUB TYPE EXAMPLES
1. Individual placement: Individual lives with family or another person who provide accommodation and support in ordinary housing.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Adult family placement• Supported lodging• Home share
2. Self-contained independent housing: Self-contained	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Rented from local authority, registered social landlord,

<p>accommodation usually unregistered, various forms of care and support are possible including management within a mixed locality service</p>	<p>private landlord</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rented from parents • Sub-letting lodgers • Outright ownership • Shared Ownership • Trust Ownership
<p>3. Locally Based Properties grouped in a small geographical area, self-contained or shared. A central resource which can be shared facilities and/or staff can be used by residents. Accommodation is usually rented and may be registered or not.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Core and cluster • Community Support network • Mixed shared and self-contained • Intentional communities
<p>4. Single site self-contained or shared housing: Larger scale building with a number of self-contained flats or bedsits or shared properties. The defining characteristic is the presence of staff in the building and some shared facilities in the building such as a launderette, lounge, games room and usually an office for staff. Staff may be visiting or permanently on site.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sheltered Housing • Clustered flats or bedsits • Mixed shared and self-contained
<p>5. Small shared housing: Less than four people registered or unregistered. Characteristic is shared living and shared facilities. Although there maybe some private facilities e.g. cooker, en-suite bathroom, it is not fully self-contained accommodation. Staff may be visiting or on site.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small registered care home • Group home - unregistered
<p>6. Large shared Housing: More than four people live together. Little or no private facilities tend to be provided. Usually registered and therefore characterised by on-site, paid staff with someone “on duty” 24 hours a day.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Large registered care home

Many of these individual types can be managed through a network or locality service using a mix of building or tenure/ownership types with a single support service.

8.1.2. Support Options

This is an accommodation strategy. Independent housing is of limited use if the right support is not available. There is not scope here to go in to full detail on each type of support but provide a checklist to illustrate the scope of possibilities. Some support options are integral to some of the models already described like the Adult Placement and so are not repeated.

Type of Support	Description
Family Carer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Half of all adults with a learning disability are supported by relatives. Carers themselves may need support and have rights. This may be periodic respite care, day services or other help. Carers may do some of the care with the individual also receiving some other care.
Domiciliary Care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provision of service in a person's home typically to deliver personal care. Can be from an organisation/agency or from an individual.
Floating support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teams of workers who move from individual to individual to provide assistance tailored to their needs which may change overtime. • Support is not tied to buying a particular property
Keyring Network	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In this model typically 10 disabled people live in close proximity to each other but have their own property. Some may share if they wish. In the centre of the network is a project worker whose role is: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To provide very limited support to each member such as getting to appointments, paying bills • Help establish and maintain a social network amongst members. This may be by bringing members together for meetings, organising activities

	<p>and pairing up members building on their abilities. So a physically disabled but articulate wheelchair user is linked with a physically fit by non-verbal member of the group. Together they can shop more easily than either can</p>
<p>Care Package / Direct Payment / Individual Budget</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Each disabled person may be entitled to a package of care following assessment and subject to Fair Access to care criteria. Historically Social Services provided much care directly. More recently they have more often contracted with independent care providers. All disabled people now have a right to have a Direct Payment to manage their own package of care if they wish. This may be extended by even more comprehensive “Individual Budgets” in future.
<p>Support Tenant</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some disabled people share their house with someone who is also a tenant. Arrangements vary but typically in return for providing some low level support – like helping to make a meal several times a week, doing a sociable thing with the disabled person each week – the support tenant lives rent free. They may also get a small payment but contribute to household bills.
<p>Community Service Volunteers</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Volunteer workers who could also be support tenants.
<p>Assistive Technology (AT)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A wide range of AT is now readily available often at low cost. It can play a role in supporting disabled people. There is a vast array of potentially useful equipment • At the most basic level “Telecare” which commonly

	<p>consists of a set of monitoring devices linked to a dispersed alarm unit that can call for help if needed either from nearby staff (or relatives) or via a Central Control monitoring service.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Monitoring Devices will typically be of two types:<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Environmental monitors like intruder, smoke, fire temperature extremes2. Devices to monitor or assist a person. Individual alarms commonly used in learning disability services include fall detection, enuresis alarm and epilepsy alarms here are also “Telehealth” devices that can monitor health remotely and devices and equipment that can enable more physically disabled residents.
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9. ACCESS TO AFFORDABLE ACCOMMODATION

Although there are a range of housing tenure types, including home ownership and private renting, for a high proportion of adults with learning disabilities these are unaffordable.

Access into affordable housing is therefore the only option, if they wish to live in ordinary housing in the community. The term affordable is clearly related to a person’s income levels. For the majority of adults with learning disabilities affordable housing means access into Social Housing i.e. Local Authority (Council) housing and Housing Association properties.

Local Authorities have expressed concerns that support packages are not always in place or confirmed by Social Services when housing applications are made. Local Authorities are reluctant to house someone if they are not confident that support will be provided. Some learning disability teams have a clear understanding of the restrictions within current lettings policies, the demand for housing in some neighbourhoods and the range of priority groups that Local Authorities are trying to meet, while others don’t.

Too often the success of people in gaining access to local authority housing stock was due to the flexibility of individual officers than a clear policy statement. This has led to great inequalities across the County.

In order to give people with a learning disability a greater chance of gaining access in to Social Housing, operational teams in partnership with Children's and Family Services should assist the individual in filling an application form out for Social Housing just before their 18th birthday to increase the chances to be placed via the local authority.

A problem clearly identified was for those adults living with older carers who are ready to move to their own accommodation. Within standard lettings policies they are seen as being adequately housed and do not become a priority until a crisis is reached.

9.1. Renting

9.1.1 Public Sector

9.1.1.1. Access

A disabled person may apply for housing to rent from a local authority or housing association in the same way as anyone else. Under the Disability Discrimination Act (2005) housing services are covered by the new duty to promote equality of opportunity.

The Act requires public sector landlords to make "reasonable adjustments" and the Housing Corporation has a statutory duty to ensure adherence to this Act in relation to Registered Social Landlords.

All local authorities/RSL are required with the introduction of choice based lettings. They may need to make adjustments to ensure disabled people are not disadvantaged by the process. Some authorities have introduced staff and/or processes to ensure pro-active bidding for properties by disabled people. The Disability Rights Commission has suggested various adjustments for disabled people or policy requirements which may become necessary under this duty:

- Providing rent books and tenancy agreements in accessible formats
- Gathering evidence around disabled peoples' experience, e.g. how long do people have to wait for accommodation? How long is the wait for adaptations to be done? The DRC recommends Disability Housing Registers and mechanisms for providing support in making applications.
- Housing strategies should be developed in consultation with disabled people. The needs of disabled people should be assessed on a cross-boundary basis to explore support schemes covering more than one area.

- Homelessness applications and housing advice processes will have to be informed by evidence of the problems faced by people with disabilities. Information and homelessness services will have to be available in a range of formats, with accessible offices.
- Disabled people should be prioritised where there is a poor take-up by disabled people, or where their experience of services is poor.
- Disability equality training should be given to staff.

9.1.1.2. Succession

Large numbers of adults with a learning disability live with relatives. When those relatives become ill, frail or die the best option may be for the disabled person to continue to live in the family home. Where the parents (or other relatives) are tenants this requires planning.

For those whose relatives rent in the public sector there is the possibility of succeeding to the tenancy:

- If the landlord is a local authority, provided this is the first succession the son or daughter (or other close relative) living at home has a right to succeed to the tenancy.
- If the landlord is an RSL there are no similar statutory rights. However, the Housing Corporation guidance says that a person who would otherwise be in housing need, who normally resides in the property, should be granted a new tenancy.

In either case, even if there is no right to succession, the landlord may still decide to grant a tenancy.

Social Services or other agencies may try to follow good practice and put in place long term plans for adults being supported by family carers at home in advance of the time when the carers can no longer continue. When, in all the circumstances, it is decided the best option is to continue to live in the family home a good option is for the son/daughter (or other relative) to become joint tenant with the parent(s). This secures their position.

In the case of a private sector landlord there are no statutory rights to succession.

9.2. New housing to rent

Registered housing associations are the only source of new (quasi) public sector, subsidised housing, for rent. Allocations are made on a two year cycle to a limited number of lead development housing associations. Any additional provision requires:

- RSL involvement and commitment
- Local authority support

Historically 10-12% of the Housing Corporation Social Housing Grant funded programme went to a range of supported housing projects. For a variety of reasons including difficulties with guarantees of revenue funding the programme declined substantially. The Corporation is now working hard with RSL's to build back this element of the programme to its previous level.

RSL rents (or local authorities) are not referred to the rent officer as a matter of routine. The effect of the Social Housing Grant subsidy is to help rents be affordable and for those who qualify acceptable to Housing Benefit.

9.2.1. Private and independent sector renting

Historically, renting in the private sector has generally been avoided by people with learning disabilities. However:

- The private sector after many years of contraction is now growing. This is partly driven by private individuals and companies developing "buy to let" as an investment strategy.

9.2.2. Renting in the private sector – pros and cons

The main attraction of renting in the private sector is that it considerably extends the choice of rented property. It may be a matter of waiting many months, if not years, for a suitable property to become available in the public sector. This is particularly true where a bungalow is required or a particular neighbourhood.

The main disadvantage of the private sector is the lack of security of tenure. Private landlords will usually offer a shorthold tenancy which means that after the first period of letting, commonly six months, the individual can be asked to leave on two months notice and has no redress or excuse for not leaving if the notice is properly given. In the public sector there is much greater security of tenure and an individual can be asked to leave their property only under certain conditions set out in housing legislation with considerable protection given by courts.

Private sectors landlords are not subject to regulation, security or particular quality standards set down by the Housing Corporation or Audit Commission in the same way a Registered Social Landlord is.

Pros	Cons
Extends choice of available property	Insecure tenure, may not be permanent
Speed of access	Quality of landlord uncertain/variable. Unregulated
May be only source of suitable property	Service and property standards variable
A good way to try out living with a friend or partner	Rent levels may be higher than local authority or registered social landlord. Need agreement to housing benefits level
	May decline to let to someone on benefits. May be unwilling to adapt property.

9.3. Ownership Options

We move now to consider the different ways people may be able to acquire a property. At the outset, to understand how this is possible for disabled people who may be unable to work it is necessary to understand the benefits system on which a range of possibilities rest.

9.3.1. Income support Mortgage Interest (ISMI)

Most people seeking help with interest payments on a mortgage because, for example, they have become unemployed must now wait 39 weeks before they get any payments from the Benefits Agency. Usually it is not possible for someone to take out a new mortgage whilst claiming Income Support.

The rules that apply to disabled people are however slightly different in some important ways.

Income Support is in principle available to meet the interest payments on a mortgage taken out to purchase a property more suitable to the needs of a disabled person.

Income Support is available to meet any increase in mortgage interest payments where a further loan has been taken out to purchase a property more suitable to the needs of a disabled person.

The key criteria are:

- The person is disabled – which for our purposes normally means in receipt of a disability benefit.
- Eligible for Income Support
- In need of more suitable housing

The maximum loan is £100,000.

Note:

- The regulations say shall and not may - there is a difference
- You must be able to satisfy the test of "**needing alternative accommodation more suited to the special needs of a disabled person**". Sometimes this is clear cut - for example a home is closing and new accommodation must be found, or someone has become homeless. It may be formal recognition in a care assessment carried out by the local authority that different housing is needed that will satisfy this test
- The normal benefit rules about housing not being too large or excessively expensive apply to disabled people
- You must have been in receipt of Income Support for a continuous period of 39 weeks or more before you can get interest on a mortgage met

There is not a set "check list" of what being in need of more suitable alternative accommodation means. A wide variety of circumstances may meet this test. It could well include currently living with older carers no longer able to cope and situations like the closure of a care home.

The starting point is often a discussion with the DWP to see if they would repay a mortgage through Income Support in whatever circumstances apply. The lender would also need to be advised formally by the DWP whether the mortgage could be repaid in this way. In most cases, the DWP will only confirm that Income Support would be payable to meet the mortgage interest payments once a mortgage has been granted to you by the lender. However, a lender will not usually agree a mortgage until the DWP has agreed to repay the mortgage. A classic catch 22!

This situation can usually be resolved by the DWP and the lender discussing the matter between them to see if a solution can be reached. A 'DL/IS 170' letter can be requested from the DWP, this is a standard letter which states that 'in principle', based on the information given to them by the claimant, they would be able to pay interest on the loan. It helps if someone is prepared to act as a guarantor for the mortgage.

In practice getting a mortgage that is to be re-paid by ISMI is problematic with relatively few lenders in the market. The Kent Reliance Building Society is particularly helpful.

They offer:

- A “product” where the interest rate on the mortgage is tied to the rate paid by the DWP.
- 100% mortgages
- Interest only mortgages

The latter is relevant because ISMI only pays interest not capital. The capital is only repaid when the property is re-sold at some point in the future. Sometimes families who have supported sons and daughter into ownership using ISMI make their own arrangements to re-pay the capital although this may not be strictly necessary:

- In their will they make provision for part of their estate to repay the mortgage
- Take out a separate endowment policy unrelated to the mortgage but intending that the eventual proceeds will repay the mortgage.

9.3.2. Outright ownership

Home ownership is the most secure form of tenure. The main ways of becoming a full owner are through inheritance or being gifted a property or by purchase through a mortgage:

About three out of four people now retiring are homeowners. More than half of all adults with a learning disability are supported by relatives. This means it is unavoidably the case that the number of disabled people inheriting property directly will grow. So this is one obvious and inevitably growing way whereby disabled people will become outright owners. Note that inheriting a property does not require legal capacity as no contract is involved so anyone, no matter how complex their needs, can become an owner under this route.

Parents or relatives can also gift a property to a son or daughter so they own it outright during their life time. A property occupied as the principle home does not count as an asset for the purpose of welfare benefits. Thus, gifting (or bequeathing) a property is one of only two ways (the other is setting up a trust) whereby parents may effectively make some long-term financial provision for children without taking them out of benefits.

The long-term problem with home ownership may be in meeting the cost of maintenance and ensuring it is done. In practice the owner will have to meet day

to day maintenance (and property insurance) costs from benefits or other income. Major items of expenditure are a particular problem as savings cannot be built up because of Income Support capital limits. The best way round this, if circumstances allow, is to establish a discretionary trust which can be used to fund (and if necessary arrange) maintenance. There are, however additional ways of meeting maintenance costs. For larger items of repair or improvement owners may consider:

- Renovation grants including Disabled Facilities Grants available through local authorities
- Income Support for Mortgage Interest for major repairs or 'adapting a dwelling for the special needs of a disabled person' (Schedule 3 of the General Income Support Regulations).

One of the key problems with using ISMI is the £100,000 limit means in Essex it is unlikely to be sufficient to buy a property outright. It is for this reason that shared ownership can be such a valuable option. In addition the shared ownership route can solve the problem of how someone dependent on benefits can afford the upkeep of a building.

9.3.3. Shared ownership – RSL model

Shared ownership is perhaps more usefully described as “part buy, part rent”. Shared ownership is a programme operated by some registered housing associations and a very small number of charitable organisations. The key features are:

- Part of the equity is purchased by the individual and part is rented from the landlord who continues to own the other part
- Shared ownership does not mean you share living in the property with anybody unless you want to
- With a housing association it has been possible to buy anywhere between 25% and 75 % of the equity initially
- In the long term it is possible to do what is called “staircasing” and buy out the rest of the equity and become an outright owner
- It is possible to use ISMI to purchase the part that is owned by the disabled person but it is also possible for relatives to fund this part if they have the cash available.

- The part that is rented will qualify for Housing Benefit if the individual is eligible
- Housing Benefit can include an element to pay for all the management and maintenance of the property irrespective of the share that is owned. The standard housing association lease is amended to provide for this

Key advantages of shared ownership over outright ownership are:

- It is possible to acquire more expensive property that exceed the £100,000 ISMI limit because only part of the equity (25%, 50%, 75% ...) is being purchased. So for example a larger property for three or four people to share costing £200,000 can still be afforded within the ISMI limits if a 50% share is purchased
- Because there is an organisation who owns part of the equity the problem of who will manage and maintain the property is solved
- Similarly because Housing Benefit will meet the maintenance costs the problem of how maintenance will be afforded in the long term is also solved provided the standard lease normally used by Housing Association is amended to put the maintenance obligations on the landlord rather than the shared owner.

It has been possible to buy a new property sold on shared ownership terms and many associations develop small estates some or all of which are sold as shared ownership. It has also been possible to buy existing properties being re-sold. A particularly useful programme called Do-It-Yourself-Shared-Ownership (DIYSO) enabled disabled people to choose a particular type of property in a particular location. This was then purchased by the association and a share immediately sold on to the shared owner or after adaptation. DIYSO formally ceased as a programme some years ago but imaginative, helpful association have been able to use alternative programmes in the same way.

Some of the issues around shared ownership which help to explain why it is still a relatively unusual option, despite the considerable attractions of this model are:

- Not all housing associations do shared ownership. Many of those that do offer shared ownership treat it as largely a commercial activity rather than a form of social housing to meet a need
- As a consequence many are unfamiliar with the ISMI system and will routinely turn down applications from people seeking to use ISMI arguing that it is only affordable to applicants with an earned income – it is

intended to work with local authorities and RSL's in Essex to publicise this to people with learning disabilities and carers.

- Getting a mortgage can be problematic. Not all lenders lend on shared ownership. Many of those that do, as a matter of policy, will not lend to people who are using benefits to repay loans. In addition, lenders may be concerned about the legal capacity of the individual who is purchasing fearing that the loan contract is potentially voidable. It is hoped that the Mental Capacity Act will help solve this problem.
- Similarly officers of the Department of Work and Pensions are often unfamiliar with the regulations quoted above and may not immediately agree that ISMI is payable
- Many associations that offer shared ownership are unfamiliar with working with people with learning disabilities. Experience suggests that this will be a labour intensive and time consuming process involving a lot more work than is involved in a sale of a shared ownership property say to a young couple or a single person in employment setting up home for the first time, which is who shared ownership is primarily aimed at
- Finally, there are some costs involved in becoming an owner, whether outright or shared, for which there is no immediate source of finance. These include valuation and surveyors fees, legal costs and of course the cost of furnishing and equipping a new home.

9.3.4. Homebuy – RSL model

In 2006 the Housing Corporation altered the Low Cost Home Ownership arrangements replacing shared ownership as described above with a series of “Homebuy” arrangements. These are still primarily aimed at first time buyers and key workers unable to afford housing to buy in areas where they are needed. The arrangements do however also explicitly over disabled people.

Social Homebuy

- LA/RSL tenants buy share in own home at discount
- Maximum rent 3%
- Minimum purchase 25%
- Discount £9 - £16,000 pro rata share

New Build Homebuy

- Acquire share of newly built

- Maximum rent 3%
- Minimum purchase 25%

The position of disabled people was considered by the ODPM (now CLG) and Housing Corporation in setting up new arrangements. The CLG said:

“We are committed to promoting choice and housing opportunities for people with long term disabilities”

They recognised:

- Disabled people may require properties near existing support networks
- Responsibility for repairs could be with RSL rather than fall on the disabled tenant who may be unable to do or afford normal maintenance

A further Homebuy model is available and funded by the Housing Corporation. This is called Home Ownership for Long Term Disabilities (HOLD). The difference from the three basic models is:

- An existing property can be purchased but associations have the same flexibility of tenure as new-build homebuy
- A lease can be granted by the RSL that puts the maintenance obligation on the landlord.

This means in effect the previous DIYSO arrangements explained above can still in effect be operated:

- Second hand properties can be purchased and selected by the disabled person
- A rent can be charged
- Housing Benefit can be paid and include the cost of maintenance to those eligible
- The landlord can take responsibility for maintenance

9.3.5. Shared ownership – privately financed

A few housing associations and charitable housing organisations have developed a purely privately financed version of shared ownership which is why the exploration of RSL shared ownership remains relevant despite Homebuy. The advantages are:

- No cost limits therefore allowing higher design standards, better location, size and type
- No restriction because of the size of Housing Corporation programme – only the association’s ability to borrow
- No waiting for Housing Corporation allocations – can move more quickly

- Less bureaucratic – only association/charity rules to be met
- No Housing Corporation tests of value for money
- Outside Housing Corporation rent regime

The key advantages apart from those that apply to all shared ownership are essentially that there are no external restrictions on the programme and possibilities. For an RSL there are no real restrictions.

The big advantage of course for the individual and local authorities needing better housing is that shared ownership may be a route to getting the right type, size, location of property at much less than the cost of outright purchase, if that is the only alternative.

The models vary and can be what the organisation makes them. In the simplest form the principles are:

- If the individual qualifies, a mortgage can be raised up to £100,000 with interest payments being repaid via ISMI
- The balance of the cost of a property is met by the developer raising private finance
- The developers loan is repaid from a rental charge
- The total gross rent can include management and maintenance charges. If the individual qualifies the rent will be eligible for Housing Benefit

The latter eligibility depends on the landlord being a local authority, housing association or charity with housing purposes. A purely commercial organisation cannot operate on this basis.

The key problem is that these schemes do not have any Social Housing Grant subsidy. As a consequence rents will necessarily be higher than the same property with subsidy. Rents in these schemes will be referred to the rent officer and be restricted consequently possibly making them uneconomic. There are however some solutions – which could include elementary funding from a charity which may give them long term capital growth.

Or an RSL could establish a privately financed programme of shared ownership specifically for disabled people. This model involves an equity loan from the family (or a discretionary trust) to the RSL.

The above models would be explored on a case by case basis.

9.4. Buy to let

A property is purchased to rent to a relative. Buy to let has become quite common as a means of investment. Mortgages are now readily available for buy to let. Typically 85% of value can be obtained and rental cover of 130% of the loan is required. Many families can raise the money either from other assets or re-mortgaging their own property.

The model is essentially that a property can be purchased (or sometimes built) for the son/daughter. They pay a rent to the family which in turn is claimed by the son/daughter from Housing Benefit.

Although this has become quite a common solution there are several issues to be aware of:

- The rent on which Housing Benefit can be claimed will be set by the rent officer. This “reference rent” is very likely to be less than the actual cost of loan repayments if an 85% commercial mortgage has been taken out and the management, maintenance and major repair costs that would normally be funded from the rent.
- On the other hand, taking a long term view, the property may be expected to increase in value. Historically investment in property has produced good returns as house prices have moved up although there can be short term falls involved as in 1989.
- There are questions around whether if a parent lets a property to a son or daughter they will be eligible for Housing Benefit because they are related. The regulations are set out in a 1998 Statutory Instrument (SI) 3257. This SI does not encourage renting by close relatives because of fears that benefits could be exploited in some way by families setting up artificial letting arrangements. However, at the end the SI explains that one relative may let to another provided:
 - The letting is on a commercial basis
 - Housing Benefit administrators are satisfied the arrangements are not being set up simply in order to obtain Housing Benefit
 - The family must in all respects act as though they were an ordinary, private landlord.

9.4.1. Adult Placement, supported lodgings and Homeshare

This is the last type of provision we look at. It depends on existing housing rather than new housing.

Adult Placement is the term used to describe an arrangement where a disabled person is placed and lives with a family as a member of its family although the family doing the caring are paid – usually by Adult Social Care. Essex County Council has developed An Adult Placement Scheme forplaces, which is now commencing.

A key characteristic of an Adult Placement is that the person placed shares in the life and activities of the Adult Placement carer. The Adult Placement carer is expected to treat any person living in their home as a member of the household with the same rights and responsibilities as any household member.

The term **Supported Lodging** is generally used to describe schemes where the person receives much lower levels of support, than individuals using Adult Placement schemes. Schemes are run by local authorities and independent private and charitable organisations.

Supported Lodgings differ from Adult Placement in the level of involvement and support from the host family / landlord and the level of the support arranged as part of the placement. Homeshare similarly usually involves only minimal support. An Adult Placement carer cannot accommodate more than three people, whilst Supported Lodgings can cater for more than this. Placements are likely to be most successful where they meet the wishes and needs of the individual either because they have expressed a preference for this type of accommodation or because people who have got to know through assessment or person centred planning that the person would be particularly suited to the type of support available.

Adult Placement

Pros	Cons
Greater Flexibility to meet the individual needs of the individual	Lack of security inherent
Opportunity to experience family life for those who have never experienced it	Circumstances for host family may change causing placement breakdown
Higher chance of being included in the community	Sharing facilities with others
Living in ordinary houses	Little scope to retain large personal possessions
Able to make personal attachments that will last.	
Person gets more involved in the family than in Supported Lodgings	
Good support from Adult Placement Scheme	

Supported Lodgings

Pros	Cons
The tenant gets the extra support that can make the difference between living independently and residential care.	Support can feel intrusive once the tenant gets established
A greater level of security of occupancy than most Adult Placements.	Lower level of support from services
Access to housing benefits ensures higher disposable income.	Little or no regulation
Greater privacy than in some adult placements	

10. ACCOMMODATION AND SUPPORT NEEDS

Representatives of people with a learning disability, carers, health, social services together with a range of partner agencies meet to agree the direction of LD Services. Partnership Boards are required to agree their local strategies for a range of topics.

Sub Groups for the Essex Learning Disability Partnership Board were set up to consider a way forward on accommodation.

The consultation with service users, carers and other stakeholders has shown a lack of adequate information on accommodation choices, both on what is available and how to access different housing options.

The link between housing and support has been made throughout this strategy. The level of support required to enable adults with learning disabilities to live more independently varies greatly between individuals. Some will require minimal input while others will require 24-hour support. The types of support required could include personal care and tenancy support.

10.1. WHAT PEOPLE SAY THEY WANT

Various consultation exercises have been carried out over the past few years to enable people with a Learning Disability and their carers to say what the current problems are for them in trying to access accommodation and what they would want.

Extensive consultations informed the Learning Disability Joint Investment Plan for 2004-7 which includes a series of actions to address Housing issues for people with a learning disability.

In general, all of the consultation exercises have given the same message and the findings are summarised below. In addressing these concerns, we need to recognise again the supporting role that the County Council has in identifying needs, and facilitating the provision of support within the accommodation options.

A key theme arising from the consultations has been that there needs to be a range of accommodation options available for people. Concerns were raised that the 'push' to move more people into independent living had been misinterpreted into 'living alone' which was not the housing of choice for a number of people. There were very clear views, backed up by statistics that no one model of accommodation will meet everyone's needs, and that development of a range of options should be pursued.

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- There needs to be more information on choice, availability and how to access housing. At present people don't know what their options are, what is available in their local area and how they can get access to it;
- There need to be better links between housing, social services and carers with improved communication. At present people don't feel that they are listened to, aren't able to properly influence their housing choices and don't feel that housing and social services talk to each other enough;
- More emphasis needs to be placed on planning and actioning moves for people living in the family home at an earlier age. Carers want to have a life, they feel that they are too often left to 'get on with it', they would expect their adult children to be moving out of the family home at an earlier age;
- Priority should be given now to those living with older carers to avoid crisis situations;
- The accommodation needs of people with more complex issues including physical disabilities and challenging behaviour need to be addressed;
- Accommodation schemes need to be made available for people to gain independent living skills before moving on to less supported accommodation;
- Opportunities to give people independent living skills should be taken whenever possible i.e. when using respite services;
- The future funding of care and support packages needs to be clearer to give carers/people with learning disabilities confidence in taking the step to supported housing;
- A range of accommodation options need to be available, people should not be pushed into one model of accommodation because that is 'flavour of the month';
- People don't always want to live on their own, they would find this too lonely and isolating, they want a range of accommodation options to choose the one that best meets their needs;
- The existing achievements in securing new accommodation needs to be a sustained and reported so that people are aware of what resources are becoming available across the county,
- There needs to be a fairness into accessing affordable accommodation across the County;

- There needs to be recognition that people with learning disabilities are living longer, there are more and older people with learning disabilities who are now experiencing issues linked to their age including physical illness and in particular dementia. There needs to be clarity about the commissioning strategy for these people;
- All care plans should help identify people's accommodation needs and help plan supply
- Opportunities and support need to be identified for people to 'move on' into other accommodation as their needs change;
- People want a say in where they live and who they live with;
- People want sufficient support to live more independently;
- People don't want to be 'passed from pillar to post' when trying to find out what is available.
- The use of Telecare/Assistive Technology needs to be promoted. With the appropriate use of Telecare, risks can be minimised and more independence for the individual facilitated.
- With Self directed support (Individual Budget's, direct Payment) more people will be able to exercise the choice of living in their own home.

11. CONSULTATION ON THIS STRATEGY

SECTION 5

12. FUNDING OPTIONS

We face a challenge to deliver the strategy within existing resources. Funding from the government for health and social care will not increase.

Our vision is to increase the range of housing and support options available to people with learning disabilities in their own community and lessen the reliance on residential care.

We will seek to maximise additional funding resources such as Independent Living Fund (ILF).

12.1 Capital funding

In terms of capital funding, the aims include maximising access to existing programmes of capital investment in housing and increasing the availability of and access to private housing, both for renting and ownership.

12.1.1. Social housing sector and funding.

In relation to the social housing sector the funding options include:

- Affordable housing developments or those in the pipeline with already committed capital funding. Each of the district housing authorities have an affordable housing development programme delivered by their registered social landlord (RSL) partners. These programmes vary in size depending on the circumstances of each district. It is possible for people with learning disabilities to access affordable social housing for rent provided they are on the local housing register and their housing need has been recognised and prioritised by the local authority. These new developments will also include the development of housing for sale, typically on a shared equity basis. This housing is also potentially accessible by people with learning disabilities subject to their financial circumstances and the eligibility criteria used by the district housing authority and RSL. However access to affordable social housing is limited but the current demand far outstripping supply in all 12 districts.
- Opportunities for remodelling of current buildings and services. The SP team is currently conducting a strategic review of all the sheltered services in Essex.

- Funding for adaptations is available through Disabled Facilities Grants from District councils. These are typically available to people living in private housing and are subject to an assessment from an occupational therapist. The budgets held by the District Councils are cash limited and demand typically exceeds the available funding. Most social landlords are expected to make provision for adaptations from their existing resources. DFGs are a possibility for people with learning disabilities who need to make adaptations to properties that are rented or owned privately.

12.1.2 THE PRIVATE SECTOR AND USE OF PRIVATE FINANCE

The issue of demand exceeding the current and planned supply of affordable social housing means that private sector funding options need to be a part of the solution to delivering wider housing options. These private funding options include:

- Private finance used by specialist housing organisations that have models of developing privately funded housing solutions (without using public subsidy)
- Private investment from families in housing solutions to create additional renting and ownership opportunities. These possibilities were set out in detail in the previous section of the strategy. Given the limited availability of public subsidy for affordable housing in Essex, it is essential that families and individuals have good information and advice if they are to make best use of their own private financial resources to create housing solutions.
- Disabled individuals who would qualify to obtain a mortgage up to £100,000 paid through income support mortgage interest (ISMI) which would normally be in conjunction with family investment or shared ownership with a registered social landlord (RSL).

12.2. REVENUE FUNDING OPTIONS

- Housing Benefit for rent and other eligible services – these vary across local authorities. This is an important revenue stream for many people with learning disabilities where they are fully renting in the private sector where levels of benefit payable are subject to local reference rents. These vary across districts in Essex and are set by the Rent Service, a government agency.
- Independent Living Fund (ILF) to pay for support. This is for people that receive high rate DLA (Disability Living Allowance) and receiving services from Social Care of at least £10400 per year (pro rata). The evidence from Social Services is that there is a significant opportunity to increase uptake of this funding stream for individuals. This is important as ILF is not available to people living in residential care but is available to people living

in mainstream housing. Money from the ILF is paid directly to the disabled person. Given the limited Adult Social Care and SP funding it is necessary to maximise access to ILF for all individuals who are eligible.

- Social Services Payment for assessed support needs
- Income support, DLA and mobility
- Health funding for health care services
- Health funding transferred to the local authority for people with learning disabilities resettled from long stay hospitals.
- SP money to pay for housing related support
- Individual Budgets - A consideration in relation to funding for support and care is the development of "individual budgets". This involves an individual receiving directly, or indirectly, a sum of funding from the local authority to use to meet their identified care and support needs. It is currently Government policy to test this approach and a number of local authorities are 'piloting' this approach.

The development of individual budgets for people with learning disabilities has been led through a national programme called In Control. In Control provides information, advice and practical assistance to local authorities who want to implement individualised budgets and what is termed "self directed support", that is the system whereby individual take control over their care and support requirements and have an individual budget to enable them to choose how to meet their needs, rather than having to accept choices that are provided directly or commissioned by the local authority.

Essex is one of more than 90 English local authorities that have said that it wants to introduce the approach advocated by In Control and implement "self directed support"

12.3. FUNDING IMPLICATIONS

- The existing housing need identified through the local housing registers and housing needs surveys commissioned by the district councils show that demand for affordable housing, to rent and buy, far exceeds the social housing development programmes of the district councils and their RSL partners. Therefore this is likely to be a limited source of housing for people with learning disabilities. However using the existing and planned social housing development programmes is likely to be the most effective way of procuring certain types of housing, for example wheelchair accessible housing.

- The Housing Corporation AHP 2008-2011 gave an opportunity to seek bids from RSLs for both mainstream housing which can be accessed by people with learning disabilities and specific bids for supported housing.
- Private developers and other organisation that do not draw on public subsidy will need to be part of the solution to delivering additional housing for rent. However rent levels can be high for housing developed with private finance and the sustainability of housing benefit as a funding stream for high rents is uncertain and it is unlikely to be a desirable option for large numbers of people.
- Making use of family resources is likely to be crucial to making a long term success of this strategy. It can sometimes be a difficult message for AHCW and other public bodies to present options for families to use their resources to create a range of housing solutions, but it can also be a positive message in that it widens choices, enables families to exercise more control and can be seen as an investment possibility that has the advantage of meeting the housing needs of a family member. There is evidence of a high level of interest from families in other parts of the country if these options are explained well and offered in conjunction with credible long term planning for individuals. An issue here is that for families for whom this is not an option financially, other options need to be available.
- To maximise the opportunity to deliver home ownership for a wide range of people it is desirable to have a home ownership programme that draws on all potential funding options. This could include existing shared equity schemes developed by mainstream RSLs and models using predominantly family resources.

12.3.1. REVENUE FUNDING IMPLICATIONS

The current pattern of AHCW expenditure on accommodation, predominantly residential care, will not be sustainable in the future because:

- The relatively high numbers of people living with older carers currently will need alternative accommodation in many cases when their carers die or are no longer able to care for them. This will typically arise as an emergency leading to a residential placement as the only available solution. This places additional pressure on the existing AHCW budget.
- There is evidence nationally that the numbers of young people with severe learning disabilities is increasing due to improvements in the health care of disabled babies and children. This will lead to increasing numbers of disabled young people requiring social care packages as they become adults. Using residential care as the primary response to meeting their will place further demand son the AHCW budgets.

- This strategy sets out how to achieve a wider range of housing and support options, partly in response to demand and aspirations, but also as a way of making better use of resources by maximising the range of funding sources available to fund housing and support costs.
- Residential care has a very restricted range of funding sources. A placement in a care service is funded with social care funding supplemented by funding from Income Support for the individual and sometimes with funding from the NHS. For individuals who are eligible for funding from AHCW the fees have to be met from their own income.
- Housing based 'models', present a far wider range of funding possibilities. For example the principle sources of revenue for someone eligible for Housing Benefit are illustrated in a slightly simplified form below:

COSTS	FUNDING
Rent (including some services)	Housing Benefit
Council Tax	Council Tax Benefit
Support to maintain tenancy	SP Grant
Personal Care	Adult Social Care funding with DLA/ILF/Disability Premiums
Living Expenses	Income support/other income

12.4. SUMMARY OF FUNDING OPTIONS

This strategy aims to maximise the widest range of housing options that are available to people with learning disabilities. The range of funding options that need to be considered to meet this aim are summarise below:

Capital Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use existing and planned affordable housing development programmes. • Remodel existing services, e.g. sheltered housing, using a mix of private and public funding. • Current and planned Section 106 agreement to provide, for example, specific types of housing such as wheelchair accessible properties. • Housing Corporation AHP 2008-011 bids for supported housing and mainstream affordable housing • Private finance from specialist organisations that work with
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	<p>people with learning disabilities, for example Golden Lane</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Private developers willing to work in partnership with local authorities to develop housing solutions for people with learning disabilities • Private finance from families
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Revenue Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AHCW funding. Set target to reduce spend on residential care over 5 years, suggest at least 20% target, to release for investment in housing-based alternatives to enable a wider range of funding streams to be used. • Make best use of AHCW and SP funding by maximising eligibility for and take up of DLA, particularly the highest rate of the care component • Maximise take up of ILF. • Make use of telecare as part of individual support packages to identify potential value for money improvements
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13. SUMMARY OF CURRENT POSITION

There are currently 6,059 adults with learning disabilities known in Essex. Current data shows that current accommodation provision specifically available to people with learning disability provides accommodation for only 34% of these people.

Current data shows that as at March 07 ECC supported 1366 people with a learning disability in their own tenancy, and increase of 18% in comparison to 2006.

People with a learning disability want and expect the same opportunities that are afforded to people without learning disabilities. This includes the right to access a range of housing options, to live more independently in the community, and they expect support to enable them to do this. These are not unrealistic expectations.

Essex SP at present provides revenue funding for a number of discretionary services that provide housing related support to people with a learning disability. This funding stands in the region of £8 million per annum.

Given the high level of investment made by SP in Learning disability services, in comparison to its other client groups, it is only possible for new Learning disability services to be jointly commissioned once savings and efficiencies can be identified from the existing funding pool. This in essence means that there is no new money to develop learning disability services. However, there is substantial scope to redevelop, and recycle the existing funding to provide increased capacity and quality outcome focused services.

The SP Commissioning Board has judged that the level of SP funding into services for people with a learning disability (LD) currently needs to be reduced in relation to other service areas. Also, SP-funded services need to be targeted in a way that is in line with the intended aims of the SP (SP) Programme and its Grant Conditions.

Based on discussions and previous projects, SP with AH&CW are addressing both the retraction and targeting issues through a single joint commissioning process that will

- Reduce the level of SP funding with limited impact on the AH&CW budget
- Increase the strategic relevance of SP funding in LD services, by focusing on services with low to medium need, for whom outcome-based commissioning should achieve lower reliance on care services in the medium/long term.
- Build a joint commissioning framework in the run-up to 2010 when both AH&CW block community support contracts and SP's LD services are up for review.

Family carers want to be able to support their children to move to appropriate accommodation in a planned way, and to have their needs recognised too.

There is a growing demand for accommodation in Essex with high numbers of young people reaching adulthood, high numbers of people living with older carers and a number of people in registered care who may not require registered care.

Our aspiration for the life of this accommodation strategy is to assess people with learning disabilities that are living in registered care and subsequently move these people into the community.

Care and Health Partner identified that people were placed in expensive out of county placements because their specialist needs could not be met in Essex. It is vital for the future to develop specialist services, i.e. for people with Autism, complex needs or high physical dependency needs to enable them to remain within Essex and instead of residential care work towards independence and eventually their own independent accommodation with support.

Sustained development of a range of housing options in each locality is needed over the long term. In some localities that need is more urgent than in others.

13.1. Increasing the supply of accommodations

The gap between current and future accommodation demand and supply for adults with learning disabilities is already large and if steps aren't taken now, the gap will continue to grow. This includes transitions and people with learning disabilities living with older carers.

The table below shows the number and type of accommodation units needed in the next 5 years as identified by the locality teams:

	Basildon	Braintree	Brentwood	Chelmsford/ Malden	Colchester	Harlow	Uttlesford	Epping	Rochford	Castle Point	Tendrin g	Total
Locality	44	57	Estimated 35	37	16	42	37	32	Estimated 35	Estimated 49	Estimat ed 30	414
Residential No's	18	18	18	18	19	18	18	18	18	18	19	200
Hostel Reprovision No's	N/A	N/A	N/A	19	N/A	25	N/A	20	N/A	N/A	13	77
Total	62	75	53	74	35	85	55	70	53	67	61	691

The next section sets out the implementation of increasing the supply of accommodations for people with learning disabilities, which will help to bridge the gap between supply and demand. There is clearly an ongoing need to continue with development of new schemes, particularly accommodation types which are not available within existing stock or are in such small numbers that they cannot hope to meet the future demands.

SECTION 6

14. IMPLEMENTATION AND ACTION PLAN

This section sets out an implementation and action plan to deliver a wide range of housing options for people with learning disabilities in Essex.

It covers:

- The delivery of wider housing and support option
- Information, training, partnership working with individuals, families and local authorities
- Planning with individuals and families
- Review and monitoring

14.1. TARGET NO'S OF PEOPLE WITH LEARNING DISABILITIES ENABLED TO LIVE IN THEIR OWN HOME PER DISTRICT

District	Year	Shared Ownership	General needs LA/RSL	Private Sector Leasing	Better Lives	Shared Housing	Existing LD Schemes	Total
Basildon	2008-09	2	2	6	N/A	9	1	20
Basildon	2010-11	2	2	6	N/A	9	1	20
Basildon	2012-13	3	2	5	N/A	3	1	14
Braintree	2008-09	2	2	9	N/A	9	1	23
Braintree	2010-11	2	2	9	N/A	9	1	23
Braintree	2012-13	2	2	9	N/A	6	1	20
Brentwood	2008-09	2	2	6	N/A	3	1	14
Brentwood	2010-11	2	2	6	N/A	3	1	14
Brentwood	2012-13	2	2	6	N/A	3	1	14
Castle Point	2008-09	2	6	6	N/A	6	0	20
District	Year	Shared Ownership	General Needs LA/RSL	Private Sector Leasing	Better Lives	Shared Housing	Existing LD Schemes	Total
Castle Point	2010-11	2	3	6	N/A	6	0	17

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Castle Point	2012-13	2	3	6	N/A	6	0	17
Chelmsford	2008-09	1	3	6	N/A	6	1	17
Chelmsford	2010-11	1	3	6	N/A	6	1	17
Chelmsford	2012-13	2	3	6	N/A	6	1	18
Colchester	2008-09	1	2	3	2	3	0	11
Colchester	2010-11	1	2	3	0	3	0	9
Colchester	2012-13	1	2	3	0	3	1	10
Epping	2008-09	2	6	8	N/A	9	1	26
Epping	2010-11	2	6	6	N/A	9	1	24
Epping	2012-13	2	6	6	N/A	9	1	24
Harlow	2008-09	2	9	6	N/A	6	1	24
Harlow	2010-11	2	9	9	N/A	6	0	26
Harlow	2012-13	2	9	9	N/A	6	0	26
Malden	2008-09	1	1	2	N/A	0	0	4
Malden	2010-11	0	1	2	N/A	0	0	3
Malden	2012-13	1	1	2	N/A	0	0	4
Rochford	2008-09	1	6	3	N/A	3	3	17
Rochford	2010-11	1	6	3	N/A	3	1	14
Rochford	2012-13	1	6	3	N/A	3	1	14
Tendring	2008-09	1	6	6	1	3	2	18
Tendring	2010-11	1	6	6	0	3	0	16
Tendring	2012-13	1	6	6	0	3	0	19
Uttlesford	2008-09	1	4	5	N/A	6	0	16
Uttlesford	2010-11	1	4	5	N/A	6	1	17
Uttlesford	2012-13	1	4	5	N/A	6	0	16
Total								606

14.2. RECOMMENDED ACTIONS – COUNTYWIDE ACTIONS

The following actions are to be applied to all the localities. Local actions will be addressed in addition to the overarching actions.

- Recruit a Housing Assessment Worker to undertake assessment of people with learning disabilities living in residential care with a view to move suitable clients into supported housing in the community.
- Use the funding model in this strategy, based on disinvesting in residential care to invest in housing based alternatives, to project expenditure on care and support packages for people with learning disabilities using housing based alternatives alongside DLA and ILF.
- Agree a process for making use of telecare as part of the care and support packages for people with learning disabilities. There is an opportunity to start using telecare at the onset of individualised planning with individuals to promote uptake of assistive technology.
- Identify and meet with private developers/organisations that are willing to draw up proposals of how to deliver housing solutions without using public subsidy.
- Meet with private sector landlords, initially through established private landlord forums, to identify landlords who are interested in letting properties to people with learning disabilities, including lease agreements with RSL's.
- Maintain relationship with RSL's within the County to ensure ongoing partnership working.
- Develop and provide information for families about the full range of housing and support options and how they can use their own resources to achieve some of these options. This needs to be supported with regular and comprehensive communication with individuals and families so that they know what action is being taken to widen housing options and what they need to do themselves.

- Ensure that all people with learning disabilities who have a housing need are registered on the District/Borough housing register. This should be made a requirement that all care managers ensure that people with learning disabilities who have housing need submit a housing register application and manage Choice Based Letting as applied in their area.
- Gather and develop information on housing and support needs of people with learning disabilities to inform future strategic commissioning of housing/support options.

Use existing information on housing need collected through local need surveys for this strategy and housing sub groups on needs available to ‘broker’ housing solutions at a local level.

- Maintain understanding and knowledge of Self Directed Support Agenda and its implication from the delivery of housing and support options.
- Ensure that the countywide LD Floating Support service is utilized to full capacity.

14.3. LOCAL ACTIONS

Locality	Action
Brentwood	Better information on housing and support needs of service users – carry out housing needs survey with the involvement of the housing sub group
Castlepoint/Rochford	-Better information on housing and support needs of service users – carry out housing needs survey with the involvement of the housing sub group -Managing the voids in the existing

	schemes
Chelmsford	<p>-Early needs assessment for service user at Bridgemarsh to identify alternative housing options</p> <p>- Better information on housing and support needs of service user</p>
Colchester	Managing the voids within Better Lives effectively
Epping	Early needs assessment for service user living at Shernbroke House to identify alternative housing options
Harlow	Early needs assessment for service user living at Berecroft to identify alternative housing options
Tendring	<p>-Managing the voids within Better Lives and within the existing supported living schemes</p> <p>-Early needs assessment for service user living at Magdalen to identify alternative housing options due to the closure of the hostel</p>

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Activity	Action	Timetable	Lead Responsibility	Resource Implication
Improve the range of accommodation options for people with learning disabilities in all parts of Essex	Explore the potential for improved links with private landlords to expand choice	March 2008 onwards	SP&C	Additional resource has already been approved to carry out the assessments
	To ensure that local District/Borough Councils are aware of specialist need for accommodation.	From June 2008 onwards	SP&C	
	To negotiate specific nominations and/or a priority banding within Choice Based Letting Schemes with local authority housing departments.	From June 2008 onwards	SP&C	
	Housing needs assessments of people with learning disabilities living in registered care and out of County – analysing their housing needs		AACM	
	Use the funding model in this strategy, based on disinvesting in residential care to invest in housing based alternatives, to project expenditure on care and support packages for people with learning disabilities using housing based alternatives alongside DLA and ILF.		AACM and SP&C	
	To provide easily accessible information for people with learning disabilities and carers on accommodation options and how they can be accessed.	From March 2008 onwards	SP&C	Leaflets on Housing Options in Easy Read are now available

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<p>To enable a consistent approach between local authorities to assist people with learning disabilities so they have equal access to affordable accommodation</p>	<p>To ensure that key stakeholders, people with learning disabilities, family members and Care Managers are familiar with the application process for Choice Based Lettings to maximise success of applications.</p>	<p>From March 2008 onwards</p>	<p>SP&C</p>	<p>Time to set up and attend training events</p>
	<p>Ensure good communication with the local authorities – communicate housing requirements on a regular basis.</p>	<p>From March 2008 onwards</p>	<p>SP&C</p>	
	<p>Make sure the needs of people with learning disabilities are mentioned in district housing strategies.</p>	<p>From March 2008 onwards</p>	<p>SP&C</p>	
	<p>Ensure that all people with learning disabilities who have a housing need are registered on the District/Borough housing register. This should be made a requirement that all care managers ensure that people with learning disabilities who have housing needs submit a housing register application.</p>	<p>From January 2008 onwards</p>	<p>AACM</p>	
<p>To provide easily accessible information on what accommodation and support options are available for people to improve their level of choice</p>	<p>Accommodation Advice and Shared Ownership events to be planned and developed for people, their carers and other stakeholders</p>	<p>From April 2008 onwards</p>	<p>SP&C</p>	<p>Time to update each local housing sub group on Choice Based Letting</p>
	<p>Use housing sub groups, using existing information on housing need collected through the housing need survey for this strategy and future housing solutions at a local level. The introduction of Choice Based lettings</p>	<p>From July 2008 onwards</p>	<p>SP&C and Housing Sub Groups</p>	

	by the housing authorities in Essex means the way it affects people with learning disabilities needs to be considered through providing information and support for people and their families to use the Choice Based letting scheme.			
To ensure an on going supply of accommodation, including developments of new schemes, is achieved to bridge the gap between supply and demand.	<p>Identify and meet with private developers/organisations that are willing to draw up proposals of how to deliver housing solutions without using public subsidy.</p> <p>Meet with private sector landlords, initially through established private landlord forums, to identify landlords who are interested in letting properties to people with learning disabilities, including lease agreements with RSL's.</p> <p>Introduction of a central nominations/allocations database to ensure best use of existing accommodation</p>	<p>From March 2008 onward</p> <p>From March 2008 onward</p> <p>From September 2008 onwards</p>	<p>SP&C</p> <p>SP&C</p> <p>SP&C and SPT</p>	<p>Time-gathering all the necessary information for the data base</p>
To ensure that housing and support are interlinked for people with learning disabilities to enable people to live more independently in the community	<p>SP Commissioners and Social Care to agree joint guidelines on future funding of the different elements of support</p> <p>Register to be held at team level of people with learning disability needing accommodation</p>	<p>From April 2008 onward</p> <p>From April 2008 onward</p>	<p>SP and SP&C</p> <p>AACM</p>	

	<p>Agree a process for making use of telecare as part of the care and support packages for people with learning disabilities. There is an opportunity to start using telecare at the onset of individualised planning with individuals to promote uptake of assistive technology.</p> <p>Develop and provide information for families about the full range of housing and support options and how they can use their own resources to achieve some of these options. This needs to be supported with regular and comprehensive communication with individuals and families so that they know what action is being taken to widen housing options and what they need to do themselves.</p>	<p>From July 2008 onward</p> <p>From April 2008 onward</p>	<p>SP&C and AACM</p> <p>SP&C</p>	
To ensure that Care Managers have adequate knowledge on housing issues and options available for people with learning disabilities	Training program for all Care Managers on accommodation options and access		SP&C	