Rutland County Council

Older People’s Accommodation Market Position Statement 2021

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Guardian	Karen Kibblewhite, Head of Commissioning
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Summary of document

This document provides information regarding older person's housing requirements in relation to adult social care needs. It considers the projection of future needs and the associated issues and potential opportunities relating to this.

Contents

1.0 Introduction

The purpose of this statement is to support the development of the housing market to ensure a sufficient and high-quality housing provision for over 65-year-olds in Rutland, and in particular those who may have care needs. It sets out the Council's understanding of the current housing market and potential future issues and opportunities relating to the development of older people's accommodation. As such it provides information on the housing market and is intended to prompt discussion and proposals for meeting the needs of Rutland residents.

This statement is focused specifically on housing requirements in relation to the social care and health needs of older people. Information relating to wider housing provision and needs, and to planning policy can be found at:

https://www.rutland.gov.uk/my-services/planning-and-building-control/planning

The Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2019 referred to throughout this document, and which should be read in conjunction with this can be found at:

https://www.rutland.gov.uk/my-services/planning-and-building-control/planning/planning-policy/archived-local-plan-evidence-base/housing/

2.0 Our Aims

Our aim is to deliver a wide range of flexible housing and support options for older people in Rutland in line with their needs, circumstances and individual preference. Support and advice services should be available to enable older people to maintain their independence and remain in their own homes for as long as practically possible if they so wish.

3.0 Current Overview

3.1 Demographics

3.1.1 Latest estimates show the population of Rutland to be 40,771 with a quarter of this figure aged 65 years or older.

3.1.2 Aggregated data for 2017 to 2019 shows total life expectancy for females in Rutland to be 85.4 years with 22.3 years of that being unhealthy life expectancy. In comparison life expectancy for males is 83 years with 11.5 of those years being unhealthy life expectancy.

3.2 Housing Stock

3.2.1 In 2018 a parliamentary committee reported that 64% of over 55s say a bungalow or ground floor property would be their preferred property type for retirement. Nationally accommodation of this type is in short supply with the National House Building Council (NHBC) reporting an 89% decrease in the number of new bungalows built from 1986/87 to 2017/18.

3.2.2 The average house price in Rutland in January 2021 was 29% higher than the UK average and when taking into consideration earnings highlights housing in Rutland is less affordable than elsewhere.

3.2.3 In comparison to national and regional figures Rutland has a much higher proportion of larger properties (4+ bedrooms) and conversely the number of 1 and 2 bedroom properties is below the national average.

3.2.4 Rutland has a much higher proportion of detached houses and a much lower proportion of semi-detached, terraces and flats than the national and regional averages.

3.2.5 The average number of persons per household in Rutland is in line with national figures but the percentage of households with two or more bedrooms than are deemed necessary for the size of the household is the highest in England.

3.2.6 Rutland has a strong housing market but faces challenges in terms of an ageing population, affordability and a housing stock of properties with more bedrooms than need warrants.

3.3 Accommodation and Support for Older People

3.3.1 Within Rutland there are two housing associations offering sheltered housing and a total of 547 properties to those over 50. In addition to this there are a number of sheltered accommodation apartments for private and shared ownership.

3.3.2 A total of 87 extra care properties are provided by McCarthy and Stone and Rutland Care Village, offering the option for individuals to purchase additional care and support packages if required.

3.3.3 There are 10 older people’s residential homes in Rutland, 3 of which provide nursing care; they provide 379 beds with an average occupancy rate of 72% as at May 2021. An additional residential home with nursing and dementia care is due to open this summer

(2021) and will provide 80 beds, reducing the current average occupancy rate further.

3.3.4 The average length of stay in residential care was 93 weeks in 2020/21, a reduction of 38% over the last 10 years. There are currently 99 residential placements commissioned by the Council, of which 76 are in-county. Those out of county are with very specialist providers, or are due to families' request.

3.3.5 There are a total of 9 domiciliary care providers registered in Rutland and an additional 3 out of county providers contracted to provide commissioned care. The Council commission a total of 127 domiciliary care packages, in addition to approximately 250 self-funded support packages. There has been an increase in domiciliary care in recent years, including the number of complex care packages for those requiring a higher level of support, indicating the preference for people to remain at home for as long as possible.

3.3.6 Despite an increase of 17% in the over 75 population in Rutland, the number of residential placements made over the last five years has not risen in the same proportion and instead has remained relatively consistent. This reflects the trend of people wishing to remain in their own homes

3.3.7 There are a number of support and advice services available to older people to enable them to maintain their independence. Disabled Facilities Grants, and Health and Prevention Grants can support older people to have the necessary adaptions to their properties to sustain independence and live as safely as possible. Housing MOTs and assistive technology provide a preventative service to support individual needs.

4.0 Projections and Future Needs

4.1 Population projections for over 65s suggest an increase of 24% in the next 10 years compared to an overall population increase within Rutland of 8%.

4.2 A significant increase in those aged over 75 is projected, with the total number increasing 33% by 2031. The number of those aged over 80 is estimated to rise by 52% over the next 10 years.

4.3 An ageing population suggests the number of people with a disability is likely to in increase substantially and projections published by Projecting Older People Population Information (POPPI) suggest a significant rise in the number of people with dementia (up 24%) and mobility problems (29%) in Rutland over the next 10 years.

4.4 Despite an ageing population, there is an increasing number of people who wish to remain in their own homes for longer This is reflected in the reduction in the length of care home stay and the increase in domiciliary care support. The council actively support people to remain at home where individuals' needs allow, and this trend is expected to continue.

4.5 Current residential bed usage in Rutland equates to 51 beds per 1,000 of the over 75 population. This is considerably lower than the averages used nationally to estimate bed usage which vary between 71 and 110 beds per 1,000 over 75s, and the rate of 92 per 1,000 used to estimate need in the Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2019.

4.6 With a total number of in-county beds of 459 by the end of summer 2021, applying the predicted annual population increase rates to the current bed usage rate of 51 per 1,000, there will continue to be a surfeit of beds for the next 10 years. This projection would lead a vacancy rate of c.24% in 2031. Indeed, the capacity of our provision is not expected to converge with projected demand until 2043. In addition it is worth noting that although demand projections are based on estimated population growth, the trend over recent years has shown residential bed numbers have remained at a consistent level and consequently it may be even longer before demand and availability reach a similar level.

5.0 Considerations

5.1 The relative affluence within the county means that people often self-fund their support initially, but may need to transfer to state-funded care as their financial situation changes. In the event that a self-funder is no longer able to afford their care, the transition to state-funded may necessitate a move to a different provider in order for the Council to meet the fee level. It is vital that individuals are supported to understand the implications of this and have the necessary assistance to manage the transition.

5.2 The quality of care provided should be consistent regardless of the funding route. It is essential that the Council is supported to provide services to state funded individuals and providers are not focused on affluent self-funders to the detriment of others.

5.3 As outlined in the Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) Update (2019) there is potentially a wider need / demand for retirement accommodation. However, despite being popular in terms of location and aesthetics the high service charges and concerns that new builds may not retain their value at re-sale often makes it an unaffordable or unattractive option.

5.4 It is recognised that any further new residential care home developments will have a significant negative impact on the current provision. Care home failure and financial instability due to high vacancy rates would be a real risk across the market in Rutland.

5.5 Local workforce pressures have been compounded by the significant increase in residential beds over the last year resulting in the need for additional staff. The demographics of Rutland combined with low unemployment rates and the rural geography present challenges in terms of staff recruitment and retention within both residential settings and for extra care provision.

6.0 Actions

6.1 Close working with housing providers is essential to understand the capacity in the market for potential development opportunities. The Council wishes to continue working in consultation with providers and developers to create innovative and flexible support services that meet identified need.

6.2 Developers and care providers are encouraged to approach and engage with the Council at the earliest possible opportunity prior to considering any new projects. There is currently no projected need for additional residential care beds and therefore the Council would welcome discussions prior to the submission of planning applications.

6.3 The Council will prioritise early multi-agency responses to prevent an escalation of needs and allow individuals to make earlier informed decisions and avoid the need to make a housing choice at the point of crisis.

6.4 A continued focus on early intervention and preventative support (e.g. assistive technology and Housing MOTs) is required to reduce or delay the need for acute service and hospital and residential admissions. Wherever possible individuals will be supported to undertake adaptations and utilise equipment and resources in their current homes to avoid the need for a move to alternative accommodation.

6.5 The Council will continue to work with in-county providers to ensure there is sufficient placement opportunities for those with complex needs. It is vital that the level support is appropriate to the individual and delivered to a high standard. The Council will work with existing providers to ensure staff receive specialist training and involvement with health colleagues where necessary.

6.6 Maintain the existing respite provision in order to reduce carer strain and ensure appropriate support is in place to allow individuals to remain in their own homes for as long as possible.

6.7 Continued support will be given to existing local providers to mitigate the risk to sustainability of the current and future service provision. In particular the Council will continue to work with providers to recruit, train and maintain a suitably skilled and qualified workforce.

7.0 Opportunities

7.1 Recent and current developments have been for private and shared ownership properties leaving a need for affordable specialist housing which could be explored further.

7.2 An increased supply of adaptable and accessible dwellings will allow more choice for individuals within the context of an increasing population supporting the focus on personalisation, maintaining independence, health and wellbeing and planning for the future.

7.3 To address the shortage of smaller properties in the county there is a need for 1, 2, and 3 bedroom properties which could potentially allow people to downsize to a property which is more suitable for their needs. Further details can be found in the Strategic Housing Market Assessment Update Report (2019).

7.4 The Council recognises the importance of ensuring people are able to make informed choices and effectively navigate service provisions. The Council would be interested in working with local providers to understand ways in which advice and information could be accessed in a suitable format.

7.5 The Council is interested in discussing ways in which accessible housing options can be provided county wide in varied locations to provide an opportunity for people to remain in their existing communities.

7.6 Opportunities for joint working to ensure the design and delivery is appropriate for specific needs would be beneficial, a particular example would be increased awareness of dementia needs and scheme design to improve home environments for people with the condition.

A large print version of this document is available on request

Rutland County Council
Catmose, Oakham, Rutland LE15 6HP

01572 722 577
enquiries@rutland.gov.uk
www.rutland.gov.uk