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**REPORT TO:** HOUSING SUPPORT STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP

**REPORT FROM:** JANET REGAN, ACCOMADATION AND SUPPORT STRATEGIC LEAD,  
LEARNING DISABILITY PARTNERSHIP

**DATE:** 26 MAY 2009

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Report on Learning Disability Housing Developments: Review of GCS Residential  
Care services

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Housing Support Strategic Partnership (HSSP) to:

1. Be informed of this significant project to review and re-commission housing and support packages for a large segment of residential care provision.
2. Note the time line for implementation and the potential link to housing support contracts and to the supported housing review.

**1. BACKGROUND**

1.1 Following discussions and a report to DSHG about this review and re-commissioning project it was suggested that a similar report, outlining the project, its time frames and housing implications, be presented for the information of HSSP and JCB.. The briefing paper prepared for the DSHG executive is attached to this report

1.2 As this shows, the review covers 175 people in 25 homes. Most have a learning disability, although 22 people in two homes have mental health problems. The homes are situated in four Devon housing authority areas and the housing and support implications are therefore widely significant, particularly as the aspiration is that the review will be completed and that everyone will be settled in their new living situation by June next year, although realistically there could be slippage.

1.3 The establishment of the review, planning in a very personalised way with individuals, reflects not only the inability of the current provision to meet people's changing needs (or in some instances facilitate the delivery of care to current regulatory or quality standards,) but is also the development of policy about the life expectations of "vulnerable" people

1.4 Following the white paper "Valuing People in 2001 " choice, inclusion, rights and control", have been at the centre of the work of Learning Disability services in Devon. The Partnership Board Housing plan "A HOME OF MY OWN",

developed in partnership with housing colleagues and the Supporting People Team, promotes choice in where people live. Currently 700 people live in their own homes but over 800 are still in residential care. This latter figure still makes DCC a poor performer in national performance indicator terms. Moving away from dependence on residential care is therefore a high priority for LD services.

- 1.5 The recent white paper update “Valuing People Now” reinforces the previous messages, putting them within the wider community care agenda of personalisation and individual budgets for care. In terms of housing it links to revised performance indicators recording the number of people in specific vulnerable groups (LD included) in “settled accommodation” (PSA16.) The GCS project is a major part of DCC’s personalisation programme and reducing the numbers in residential care. Within a partnership approach, it can support district councils in their achievement of PSA 16
- 1.6 The project was **not** set up as a home closure programme. There were no predetermined decisions about the future of specific homes. However experience from similar initiatives, shows that when people are offered real choice, they choose very different housing and support options. Our initial reviews confirm this. People want to either live on their own or with one other person, either in rented property or in shared ownership.
- 1.7 Housing is a key issue for the project and we have been working to develop a menu of options. Links have been established with specialist LD housing providers who offer shared ownership and rented options. For some people, the choice based lettings route may be possible either for mainstream housing or sheltered provision. (A significant number of people within the review are over 55 or have disability needs.) Maximising access to private sector renting and the possibility of developing or linking to Housing Corporation bids are also things to be considered
- 1.8 Through DSHG links are being developed with the specific district housing authorities affected to support integrated planning and appropriate access to mainstream housing.
- 1.9 Funding for support and care will largely come from the reconfiguration of existing social care and health funding. However where people have chosen to live in their own homes support providers will be selected through DCC’s brokerage system and there is an expectation that where the selected provider has a Supporting People contract, individuals would access this for their housing support needs when hours become available.

## 2. NEXT STEPS

- 2.1 Active partnership project groups have now been set up in Exeter as the first homes to be reviewed are in that area. These partnership groups are looking not just at individual needs but at longer term strategic developments around land

and buildings. A partnership agreement on a Devon wide basis is being developed at the request of DSHG.

- 2.2 The next areas where links will need to be made are in East Devon and Teignbridge, given the timeline for the project. These connections will be made in the next month.
- 2.3 It has been suggested that it would be helpful to make a link to the Devon sheltered housing review on two counts. Firstly that some housing currently unsuitable or hard to let to older people might meet the needs of people with learning disability and secondly that people over 55 may themselves be eligible for the new services for older people as they develop.
- 2.4 Where people move to their own homes and new housing support and ACS contracts are set up the opportunity may occur to link with the piloting of integrated housing support and care contracts. This will be explored with the Supporting People team

## **APPENDIX- GCS PROJECT BRIEFING NOTE**

### Background

The registered care services provided by Guinness Care and Support (GCS), formerly Devon Community Housing Society (DCHS), were established over 20 years ago. Many of the people who reside within them were formerly accommodated in long stay hospitals within the county.

There is a general agreement by those commissioning the services and GCS that there is a need for these services to develop to meet current sector standards and the aspirations of people with a learning disability. Following a number of meetings and collation of information this need for change was agreed with senior managers within ACS / GCS at the end of September 08. The approach agreed is very much one of partnership.

In order to achieve this aim a robust, detailed process was developed, drawing together the emerging social care themes such as personalization, the use of brokerage, citizenship and maximizing the development of creative, value for money service provision. In summary the aim of the project is to offer people individual choice about their care, support and accommodation and to ensure that eligible need is met effectively.

### Scope

There are 153 people with a learning disability accommodated within 23 homes and 22 people with mental health problems accommodated in 2 homes. There are a mixture of nursing homes and care homes. The sizes vary from 3- 41. Not all of the people are funded by Devon Adult and Community Services.

This project does not encompass any of the domiciliary / enabling services delivered by GCS nor does it include any services for older people.

### Process

The scope of this project is large and therefore operational teams would struggle to undertake the work due to capacity. A team has been formed from a number of professionals with diverse backgrounds and skills – The Citizenship Team. This team is 'stand alone' but works closely with the Community Teams for People with a Learning Disability.

Each individual will be supported to develop a person centred plan with the important people in their lives and this will form the basis of an outcome statement which will go through the personal brokerage.

### Partnership

At early stages it was agreed that this would be a partnership and in order to achieve our aims for the individuals this it is essential that this approach is maintained.

### Tensions and challenges

Working with people who are largely disempowered due to their life experiences and limited formal communication takes time. It involves working with many stakeholders particular as many people are unlikely to have mental capacity regarding the important decisions in their lives. It is envisaged that the whole review will take two years.

At the current time there seems to be limited affordable housing available for this group and many of the people may choose to live on their own or in smaller groups than currently.

### Summary

This project will also have an impact on the overall market place sending out a clear message that personalisation is the way forward and all providers need to be shaping their services accordingly. This will continue to place Devon firmly at the forefront of enabling people with social care needs to have maximum control of their own lives.

## Project Governance / Management

Project Lead / Manager [Jo.duff@devon.gov.uk](mailto:Jo.duff@devon.gov.uk) 07854 037997

Project Sponsor and chair of project board [Carolyn.elliott@devon.gov.uk](mailto:Carolyn.elliott@devon.gov.uk) (Assistant Director ACS)

Lead person for GCS [Sarah.andrews@guinness.org.uk](mailto:Sarah.andrews@guinness.org.uk) Regional Head of Care and Support

## Timescales for work with Guinness Care and Support Homes

This timetable below is indicative and we will be able to update it as time progresses. As situations arise we may need to change the order of priority.

	Home Name	Numbers of people	Location	Timescales for individual planning	
Group One	Pendeen	3	Exeter	Jan – April 2009	
	Fernley	9	Exeter		
	Belmont	7	Exeter		
	Longcombe	5	Exeter		
	Trianon	5	Exmouth		
Group Two	Denis Taylor	9	Exeter	April – June 2009	
	Ashley	7	Seaton		
	Windsor	11	Dawlish		
Group Three	Meadowcroft	4	South Zeal	June – September 2009	
	Okecroft	5	Okehampton		
	Deanview	5	Crediton		
Group Four	Glenlyn	5	Exminster	September – November 2009	
	Fair	6	Exeter		
	Bungalows				
	Post Hill	6	Tiverton		
Group Five	Bellever	6	Crediton	November – January 2010	
	Spurfield	12	Exminster		
Group Six	Collaton	9	Exeter	January 2010 – March 2010	
	Budlake	4	Alphington, Exeter		
	Whipton	5	Exeter		
	The Marles	3	Exmouth		
	Woodcote	6	Crediton		
Merthyr	5	Exminster			
Group Seven	Bystock Court	41	Exmouth	March 2010 – June 2010	