

Specialist Older Persons Housing

M31. Would Policy H15 provide a justified and effective approach to meeting the housing needs of older people in London? In particular:

a) Would the approach to affordable housing requirements be effective and justified in supporting the delivery of housing for older people? Would the definition of the different types of older persons' accommodation in terms of use class (class C2 and C3) be effective and justified? Would it be appropriate in a strategic document?

There is no justification for the policy point that "*the tenure split requirements for specialist older persons accommodation housing may differ to those set out in Policy H7 Affordable housing tenure.*" This again reduces the ability to assist those older persons who are most financially vulnerable and disadvantaged. In addition, it ignores the reality that there has been a drastic reduction of Council owned or Council run sheltered housing and nursing care and that this loss has now led to grave problems for London Councils, particularly those in Inner London.

Consultations undertaken by Age UK show that access to social rented /low cost housing is a major issue for older people and there is large and growing problem of older people living in the Private Rented Sector. The Shelter Commission report: Vision for Social Housing has this to say – "with no other option, a growing number of older people on lowerthan-average incomes are now renting privately. Without more social homes, they face high housing costs and insecurity beyond retirement and risk facing ill health or impairment without being able to make necessary adaptations to their home. For these renters, social housing is the opportunity to have a decent old age; free from major money worries or being forced to move home"

Affordable housing requirements should include co-housing/ multi-generational community led housing which emphasise communal facilities and provide opportunities for older people to remain independent and participate in the wider community.

b) Would the 'benchmark numbers' set out in table 4.4 be justified?

The "benchmark numbers" set out in table 4.4 appear to be rather low and it is not clear how they were arrived at.

They are said to be indicative only, but should be based upon local assessments of need and a registered waiting list in each Borough. Policy A1 should be amended so that undertaking a local assessment and maintaining a waiting list is a requirement for Boroughs.

c) What would be the mechanism for monitoring this policy and would it be effective?

d) Overall, would Policy H15 meet the objective of Policy GG4 in delivering the homes Londoners need?

The housing needs of older people is an important equality issue. Policy H15 as it stands fails to meet these needs as its concern is limited to specialist provision. This only caters for 7% of total need (Centre for Ageing Better).

To remedy this, we propose that Policy H15 is retitled Specialist and Non-Specialist Older Persons Housing and that the following wording is added:

There will be an SPG on the housing needs of the older person, produced in collaboration with the diversity or organizations that represent older people.

Furthermore, Older People may have other characteristics that impact on the services they receive and the services they want to access. For example, Stonewall Housing has developed housing schemes for older LGBT people.

In both specialist and non-specialist housing for the older person, there needs to be a 2nd or 3rd bedroom (guest bedroom) for family, volunteer or paid carer overnight stays. We seek this to be included in the policy as part of a new section D, which also includes the text in 4.15.2

H15

D Boroughs and applicants should recognise the important role that new, non-specialist residential developments play in providing suitable and attractive accommodation options for older Londoners, particularly developments in or close to town centres, near to relevant facilities and in areas well served by public transport.

Both specialist and non-specialist housing for the older person should include a 2nd or 3rd bedroom (guest bedroom) for family, volunteer or paid carer overnight stays