

**Report to:** Place, Regeneration and Housing Committee

**Date:** 2 March 2023

**Subject:** **Dementia-ready Housing Task Force Update**

**Director:** Liz Hunter, Interim Director of Policy and Development

**Author:** Helen Forman, Urban Design Manager

Is this a key decision?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Is the decision eligible for call-in by Scrutiny?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information or appendices?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
If relevant, state paragraph number of Schedule 12A, Local Government Act 1972, Part 1:	
Are there implications for equality and diversity?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

## 1. Purpose of this Report

- 1.1 To update the Committee on the Dementia-Ready Housing Task Force: its progress to date and proposed next steps.

## 2. Information

- 2.1 The West Yorkshire mayor's housing pledge in May 2021 included the commitment to establish a Dementia Ready Housing Task Force with the ambition of ensuring all older people's housing and related services are dementia friendly. The Dementia-ready Housing Task Force was established in March 2022 to deliver this commitment.
- 2.2 In 2020, 1 in 14 people aged over 65 were living with dementia in England. This is expected to rise to 1 in 10 people by 2030 (1 in 12 in West Yorkshire). About two-thirds of adults living with dementia do not live in purpose-designed housing, so we must ensure that more older people's housing is dementia-ready. This will not only lead to happier and healthier residents but will also mean fewer voids / less churn for housing providers, less pressure on hospital beds (as a home that is not dementia-friendly can lead to falls and other accidents that are life-changing), and more stable communities as people can stay in their homes for longer, allowing stronger social ties to form.

- 2.3 The primary aim of the task force is to improve the well-being of those with dementia in West Yorkshire and their carers, through its influence on public sector housing, both new and existing. The supporting aims are:
- To build an awareness of dementia across housing providers in West Yorkshire, influencing and facilitating these organisations to implement change
  - To develop strategies for signposting to related services and best practice
  - To develop a West Yorkshire Dementia-ready Housing Strategy to ensure that the region's housing provision is appropriate for rising levels of dementia.
- 2.4 The task force is made up of representatives from local authority housing teams, housing associations from the West Yorkshire Housing Partnership, public health, NHS, OHID, Homes England, the Alzheimer's Society, Leeds Older People's Forum, the West Yorkshire Health and Care Partnership and academics. It has made a commitment to focus on the individual living with dementia, to understand their needs and how they are impacted by the service and the home.

To date it has:

- Drafted objectives, both short-term (to May 2024) and longer-term (beyond May 2024), taken from the APPG Housing and Care for Older People report 'Housing for people with dementia – are we ready?'
- Compiled data on older people's housing and dementia in West Yorkshire – providers, housing options advice providers, housing services, policies/strategies and working groups – which will feed into the WY Housing Strategy
- Begun working with CEOs of the WY Housing Providers Group to establish numbers of dementia friendly new homes proposed over the next 5 years and to establish a baseline of WY housing providers homes that are currently dementia friendly
- Built a joint understanding of good practice in housing for those with dementia, including visiting two exemplary housing schemes in West Yorkshire, one with Mayor Brabin.
- Established a network of Dementia Champions at a senior level in each of the West Yorkshire Housing Partnership's organisations and held the first meeting with the Champions in January 2023.
- Drafted a set of 8 criteria which describe what dementia-readiness means – split into physical, technological and social factors as below:
  - **Entrance** - The entrance to the person's home is well-lit and personalised/made distinctive from other doors in their block, street, or housing development.
  - **Access to the outdoors** - There is access to a private or semi-private outdoor area. The access from all external doors is barrier-free/level.

- **Technology** - Assistive technology is available and promoted so that residents are aware of it. For example: adapted phones, telecare, positioning and help alarms, fall detection, etc., big-button remote control, anti-flood plugs, reminder alarms, automatic lights, large-face analogue clock etc., to suit the person's needs.
  - **Bathroom** - A level access wetroom is provided. Toilets/shower rooms/bathrooms have fixtures and fittings which are recognisable, easy to use and provide sufficient contrast.
  - **Layout** - The internal layout is easy to navigate. The bed is able to be positioned so there is a direct line of sight from the bedhead to the toilet.
  - **Cupboards/storage** - A mixture of glazed cupboards, open shelving or other identification tools (such as easy-to-read labels) are provided in the principal living areas (kitchen, living, toilet and bedroom).
  - **Neighbourhood** - There are other homes close by. There is a range of amenities within 1km of the home. Outdoor walking routes are easy to navigate and have places to rest and interesting things to see and do along the way.
  - **Social support** - There is a senior-level Design Champion at the housing provider. All staff receive a Dementia Friends session as part of their induction and this is also promoted to residents and local businesses. There is additional training for staff who regularly interact with people affected by dementia. Residents are supported to access meaningful activities, points of interest or stimulation.
- Engaged with the Department for Health and Social Care to discuss a bid to its Housing Transformation Fund to facilitate improvements to housing and expansion of dementia awareness in housing providers

### Next steps

2.5 The task force is seeking a funding source to accelerate its work. It was expected that the national Housing Transformation Fund, which promised £300m in December 2021 as part of the Adult Social Care (ASC) reform white paper, was its primary route. This fund was intended to support councils to build more specialist accommodation and integrate housing plans into their health and care strategies. Conversations with representatives of ASC in 2022 indicated £700k may be available for our project across West Yorkshire. However, with political uncertainty it looks like this fund will not go ahead. The group is therefore looking at other options to put together a smaller pot of funding from various sources to fund a task force manager who can:

- work with the Champions to understand the level of dementia-readiness in current and proposed housing provision, using the set of 8 principles, and develop proposals to improve the proposed and existing stock.

- develop the Dementia-ready Housing Strategy as part of the new WY Housing Strategy, to influence policy so that the offer for those with dementia is consistent across West Yorkshire.
- create a West Yorkshire dementia-ready housing information hub, to signpost those seeking support and information.

If a funding source cannot be found at this stage, the task force will prioritise the writing of the strategy and the information hub.

### **3. Tackling the Climate Emergency Implications**

- 3.1 Making relatively small changes to a person's home to allow them to live well with dementia there helps prevent serious health consequences that lead to a hospital stay or other care with a higher environmental impact.

### **4. Inclusive Growth Implications**

- 4.1 Many people who live with dementia have unpaid carers, who often struggle with their role. Adapting housing to be dementia-ready will take some of the pressure off those individuals.

### **5. Equality and Diversity Implications**

- 5.1 Dementia is a disease that mainly affects older people. The dementia-ready housing task force are to protect and support those people and facilitate a happier, healthier life with the disease.

### **6. Financial Implications**

- 6.1 The task force is seeking funding from external sources to accelerate its progress.

### **7. Legal Implications**

- 7.1 There are no direct legal implications arising from this report.

### **8. Staffing Implications**

- 8.1 The work is currently being undertaken by a partnership of providers and the Combined Authority.

### **9. External Consultees**

- 9.1 No external consultations have been undertaken.

### **10. Recommendations**

- 10.1 That the Committee note the content of the report and provide any feedback.

**11. Background Documents**

None

**12. Appendices**

None