

Salford

LinkAge Plus

Housing Choice

The Housing Choice service is one of the Link Age plus two year pilot projects aimed at assisting citizens of Salford who are aged over 50 to make sustainable housing choices. This is a free, no obligation, service that is available to tenants and homeowners and is a joint venture between Salford City Council's Housing and Planning Directorate, the Primary Care Trust and Community Health and Social Care Directorate.

Housing Choice

Objective

- The service enables Salford residents who are 50+ to make informed decisions regarding their housing choices and assists with any practical arrangements around moving at whatever level the individual needs.
- The team also provide support and advice for people to stay in their own home if this is their chosen option.

Activity

- 343 Salford residents have been given assistance to make sustainable Housing choices.
- Over 70 have been given assistance at various levels to move or are in the process of moving into properties that better meet their needs.
- The remaining residents chose to stay in their current properties after receiving advice around what assistance may be available to them or they were referred on to appropriate services where a need had been identified.

Achievements against objectives

The Housing Choice service has built up strong partnerships with many other professionals including all the social work teams covering Adult services, Learning Disability, Physical disability, mental health links have also been made with Occupational therapist and specialist Housing services also Age Concern, Sheltered housing wardens, and the Care-on-call Team.

Wider achievements

The team have also worked closely with local Day Centres, Home Improvement agency, Affordable warmth team, Housing market renewal teams, Housing offices across the City, Salford Home search, Choice based lettings team, Registered social landlords across the City, Health professionals and several Care agencies.

Resources

- The Housing Choice Team consists of two full time members of staff and is currently funded until October 2008 by the Department for Work and Pensions:
 - Kim Pierce – Principal Officer has almost 20 years experience working with Older and vulnerable people in a wide range of different housing settings;
 - Project Officer - Abby McEwan –has a background in welfare rights.

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- The Service is managed in house by Salford City Councils Commissioning and Projects team part of the Housing & Planning Directorate.
 - The project has received additional funding at a total of £26,000 from a successful bid made to Salford City Council's Housing Market Renewal Teams, to assist them with vulnerable clients who are living in compulsory purchase areas and need to be re-housed in appropriate housing. This was payable at £13,000 pa.

Key lessons learned

What went well

- The partnerships that have been made with other professionals across the City.
- The right mix of skills and experience held by team members.
- The promotion of the service through presentations leaflets and fact sheets.

What didn't work

- Expensive advertising campaigns.

What would we have done differently?

- Employed an administrator to free up the team to concentrate on customers.

What didn't work out as planned

- We didn't envisage the massive uptake and interest in the service that we received and therefore have generated a waiting list. Due to time restrictions we are not always able to provide as full a personal service as we would like and have to refer our customers on to other services when it is something we could have dealt with. This would limit the number of different people customers need to see.
- We have been unable to visit customers after we have given assistance to them as we had hoped and have had to rely on posted out customer satisfaction surveys

Quote: 'All my colleagues are unanimous in their view that your service is excellent. This view is reflected by the clients that I have spoken to'. (Social worker)

Further information

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Ref to website: www.salford.gov.uk/housing-choice

Related documents

Housing choice for people over 50 leaflet - See website above.