

Step 9: Exploring funding options

Housing for autistic adults and adults with a learning disability



Introduction

This step is about exploring revenue, capital and investment options to fund the development and ongoing costs of housing options for autistic adults and adults with a learning disability. This relates to sources of funding not only for autistic adults and adults with a learning disability with different types of needs, but also funding options for the different types of accommodation.

It is important to think innovatively about all potential sources of funding available, including but not limited to national funding streams, providers, private developers, investors or providers, and/or housing associations in your local area, local partnerships or consortiums, grants from charitable organisations, as well as funding from local authority revenue and local health commissioners/Integrated Care Boards. Equally important is identifying potential and suitable sites for housing developments, owned privately or by the council or NHS.

This step will improve your housing strategy and plan by clarifying the investment required by developers or providers and that which could be contributed by the local council or national funds.



KEY QUESTIONS

- What capital funding is available at the national level and how can this be accessed and deployed?
- What public sector grants or revenue sources are available at the local level to help fund housing options?
- What sources of capital funding, e.g. borrowing or social finance, are available at the local level?
- What capital or revenue funding is available from the local authority to help fund the development of housing options and meet ongoing housing and care and support costs?
- Who are the local or regional private developers or providers and housing associations that have historically been active investors in the development of housing options for autistic adults and adults with a learning disability?
- Are there any local or regional partnerships or consortiums that have a particular interest in funding housing options for autistic adults and adults with a learning disability?
- What privately, council or other publicly-owned land sites are available for development of housing with care and support?
- What is the process and pathway by which investors or developers can register their interest?

How to?



You will need to:

- Understand the different capital grants, funding programmes and loans that are available at the national level and what types of housing developments these can be accessed for. Some of these are listed below under sources of information and resources.
- It will be important to understand any restrictions or requirements attached to these funding streams, including any time constraints with respect to when such grants can be accessed, the longevity of the funding, when they need to be utilised by, and any recovery or recycling requirements.
- Identify local or national charitable organisations that provide capital and/or revenue grants for housing development.
- Identify and understand the financial models of other sources of capital funding such as borrowing and loans, private equity investment, real estate investment funds and social finance, often accessed by providers developing Specialised Supported Housing (SSH) that is exempt from the rent standard. Also consider any opportunities offered by general needs housing providers that also develop specialist housing.
- Identify your local council's sources of capital that are available and what types of housing developments these can be accessed for. For example, the Housing Revenue Account against which councils can borrow capital funding.
- Identify sources and timeframes of revenue such as rental income - often paid through housing benefit or universal credit, and the disability living allowance which are essential in covering the ongoing costs of housing maintenance, management and service charges and ensuring housing developments are viable.
- Build good working relationships with housing benefits teams to develop a shared understanding of rent rates, the applicability of the rent standard, how rent levels are set depending on how the development has been funded, the types of developments that are exempt from the rent standard, and how housing benefit regulations vary for different types of accommodation.
- Consider sources of revenue funding, (for example direct payments, individual service funds, continuing healthcare funding and section 117 aftercare funding for those leaving hospital) that will meet the ongoing care and support needs of autistic adults and adults with a learning disability in different housing types.
- Identify local housing associations, developers and providers that have been active in different types of housing developments historically and with whom the local authority already has good working relationships. It is also important to identify potential new developers/providers that are keen to enter the market and invest in building housing options for autistic adults and adults with a learning disability.



- Identify any local partnerships, for example a health and social care section 75 joint agreement or consortiums that include local housing associations, real estate investment companies, providers and developers that have an interest in housing for autistic adults and adults with a learning disability.
- Identify funding opportunities in the local housing market including local landlords, local letting agents, buy-to-let mortgages and parents of autistic adults and adults with a learning disability.
- Identify privately, council or publicly-owned land sites and assess their suitability for disposal for the development of housing options, and their associated costs. Similarly, identify any large development sites planned for housing in the local area, which could potentially allocate a small number of dedicated housing units to meet the identified needs of autistic adults and adults with a learning disability.
- Consider any potential opportunities through planning obligations (also known as section 106). This is an agreement between a developer and a local planning authority regarding measures that the developer must take to reduce their impact on the community. For example, all planning applications that involve affordable housing need to ensure that the required amount of affordable housing is developed, meets certain standards and is allocated to local people most in need of affordable housing. A commuted sum may also be paid as an alternative to the provision of affordable housing to the council.
- Develop a robust pathway for investors, providers and developers to register their interest, access further information if needed, and be kept engaged and up-to-date as plans develop.





SOURCES OF INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

Capital grants and funding programmes

- The Affordable Homes Programme run by Homes England (and in London by the Greater London Authority).
- The Home Ownership for people with long-term disabilities programme (HOLD), funded through the Affordable Homes Programme.
- The Mayor's Care and Support Specialised Housing Fund run by the Greater London Authority.
- The Better Care Fund, including the Disabled Facilities Grant.
- The Public Works Loan Board operated by HM Treasury.
- NHS England capital funding.

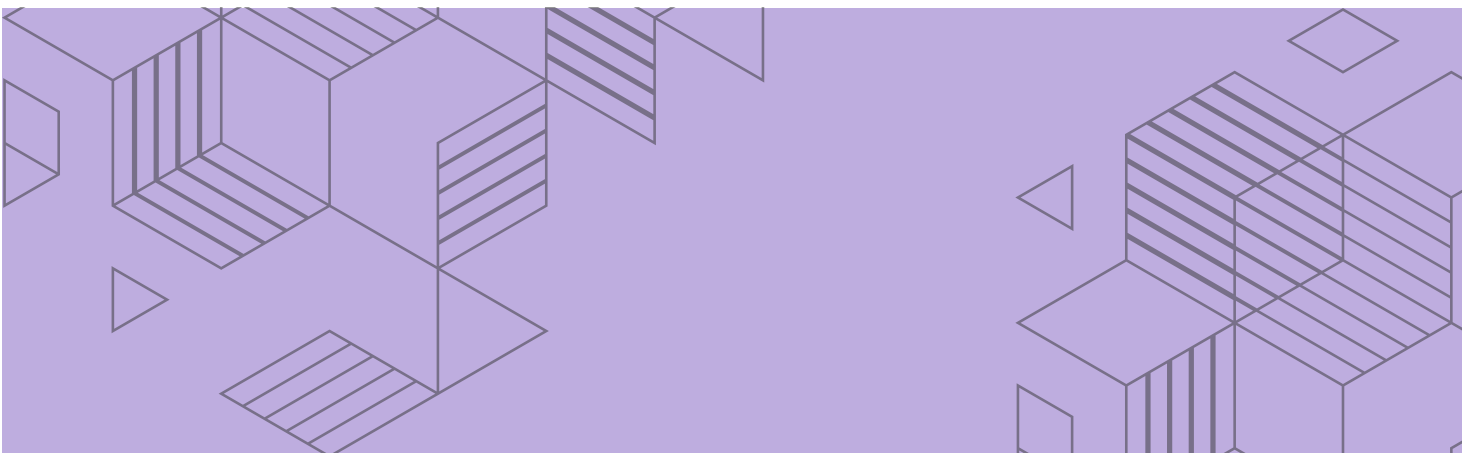
Other Information

- NHS England
- Capital funding guide – Homes England
- Department of Health and Social Care
- Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government
- Housing LIN
- Using land for homebuilding and regeneration
- Supported living resources for investors and providers
- Guide to section 106 contributions and CIL funding.



PARTNERS TO INVOLVE

- Local authority staff from adult social care, autistic adults and adults with a learning disability, housing and housing benefits, planning and regeneration, finance and resources, and land management.
- NHS England, Integrated Care Partnership, Disabled Facilities Grant teams and Better Care Fund managers.
- Homes England, Greater London Authority and local housing providers.





CO-PRODUCTION

The 'I' and 'We' statements below are illustrative examples of co-production outcomes associated with this step. We encourage housing partnerships to adapt them as they see fit to best reflect their local context.

For individuals:

- I learn about different way housing in my local area can be funded.
- I understand the role that different organisations play at the national and local level, in funding housing.
- I help decide how the information about funding should be included in the housing strategy.

For the partnership:

- We facilitate individuals' understanding of the objectives and process of commissioning, local organisations and partnerships involved, and how these affect individuals' access to services and the local market for housing for autistic adults and adults with a learning disability.
- We have conversations and take on board individuals' views on the key messages that need to be communicated when describing the local commissioning landscape.

Further information about the benefits of and principles of co-production, as well as examples of co-production in the housing sector can be found [here](#).



EXAMPLE: ST EDBURG'S PATH – SUPPORTED LIVING SCHEME IN OXFORDSHIRE

St Edburg's Path in Bicester and Nickling Place in Banbury offer 12 purposefully designed apartments for autistic adults and adults with a learning disability. All units are self-contained with private gardens and look out onto secure communal courtyards. The scheme also provides communal kitchen and lounge areas alongside designated staff offices and overnight accommodation.

It was developed through a joint commissioning approach between Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) and Cherwell District Council (CDC) who recognised the need for better quality and more cost effective housing and the need to offer an alternative to residential care, The work was formalised through a transfer arrangement whereby a number of OCC sites (which were surplus to requirements) were sold to CDC at a price which reflected the agreement to develop the supported housing.

It was recognised that the scheme would be more costly to build than typical residential units due to their higher specification requirements. Homes England provided £440,000 of grant funding for these particular units under their Care and Support Specialised Housing Fund. Without this contribution the project may not have otherwise been deemed viable.

The developments have been hugely successfully with nearly all units now occupied and noticeable improvements in tenant wellbeing. The short-term level of revenue savings was not realised on the care contract at the outset, as many of the tenants needed one-to-one support at night on an individual basis. It is hoped that as the tenants become used to living more independently these savings will be realised in the longer term. However, the supported housing model commissioned does compare favourably against the equivalent costs in a registered setting.

To read more about the development scheme read the full example [here](#).

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Toolkit available at: <https://www.scie.org.uk/housing/toolkit-for-place-based-strategies-for-housing-for-autistic-adults-and-adults-with-a-learning-disability/>

