



The Hollywood Trust asked Better Lives Partnership to do a report to look at the housing in Dumfries & Galloway that was available for people with Autistic Spectrum Disorder and related disabilities.



Better Lives Partnership is a registered charity that started in 2016

Better lives Partnership aims to support young people with Autistic Spectrum Disorder in Dumfries & Galloway.

A spectrum disorder is a mental condition that includes a range of connected conditions, sometimes also including single symptoms and behaviours. The different parts of a spectrum either have a similar appearance or are thought to be caused by the same core processes.



The stages of the research were

- To look at all important national and local plans about housing.
- To have consultation and engagement events
- To get information by doing housing and support surveys
- To look at good models of housing and to visit some
- To write a report of their findings and make some recommendations



This research came about because parents and carers of young people with autistic spectrum disorders were worried about the choices that they had when it came time to look for houses for their children or cared for young person.



We felt it was very important to have good consultation.

A consultation is when people come to give advice, opinion and information about a particular idea.



All together 44 events took place

More than **80** young people with Autism took part with the housing research.

More than **100** parents/carers took part with the housing research.



Most people chose to do this in face to face interviews and some people took part in group talks with the researchers.



An important part of the research was to do a survey about housing and support needs of young people with autism in Dumfries & Galloway.



The survey was from August 2018 - November 2018



The survey was for parents, Carers and young people with Autism

101 surveys came back

Some results from the surveys were

- Most people needed to move to a new home
- Nearly everyone needed to move to their own home
- Just over half the people were male
- Over half the people needed at least 2 bedrooms
- Most people needed to move to be independent.
- Almost half of people found their homes not good for their mental health or wellbeing.



For more details please look at the full report or contact Better Lives Partnership where someone will be able to help you further. Their details are at the end of this report.



There were lots of issues and concerns about support and care that was received. Some of these were



- Young people became very distressed and anxious when support was changed at short notice or stopped.
- You told us that sometimes support arrangements completely broke down leading to lack of stability
- There was a lack of specialist choices especially outside the Dumfries area.
- Not many places gave chances for social contact.



Workina with our Tenants

Nearly everyone said they would need a social rented home (RSL Registered Social Landlords, like Loreburn housing, DGHP).



Only a few people said that they would be able to buy their own home.



However not many people said they had registered with an RSL. And lots of people did not know how to get social housing.



This information showed us that there is not enough supported housing. The housing that is available does not meet the needs of people with Autism.



What is available is more suited to people with physical disabilities.



This means that many families having to accept that their housing situation will not change and live in houses that are not suitable.



Or look at houses outside Dumfries & Galloway which are usually very expensive.

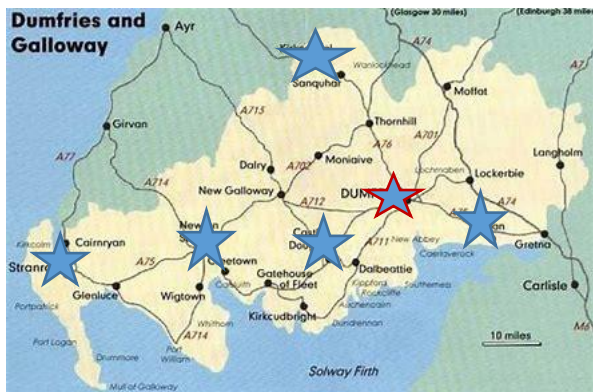


If people could be placed in specialist housing in the region this would be better for families and for the agencies that have to fund the placements.

SUGGESTIONS

This report suggests three models for supplying new homes.

- Specialist supported Housing
- Semi - permanent assisted - living pods
- Autism friendly homes mixed within general needs projects.



The new homes should be in or around

- Annan or Lockerbie
- Dumfries
- Sanquhar or Kirkconnel
- Castle Douglas
- Newton Stewart
- Stranraer



The two specialist homes should be in Newtown Stewart and Dumfries.

This would make use of already existing services and be long lasting.



All agencies involved in providing services and planning new home for young people with Autism must make sure that they listen and respond to the needs of young people.



Better plans for early and meaningful consultation need to be put into place to make sure contact is supported with a person centred approach.



To stop crisis from happening early planning with multi agency guidelines and methods should be used.

New housing must look at the needs of the individual and what they need.



For lots of families there were big gaps in their understanding around housing choices.



They did not know where to go for expert housing advice that really understood and responded to their needs.



A committed housing advice service is needed to develop an expertise in understanding the needs of people with disabilities and complex needs. This service should be supported by both government and voluntary agencies.



There should be a priority given in the Strategic Housing Investment Plan for new social housing to provide for the needs of people with ASD. The new homes should have a minimum of 2 bedrooms.



The design and layout of the houses should be flexible, original and respond to the needs of the individuals.



A target of 80 - 120 more suitable social rented homes is a reasonable target over 3 - 5 years.



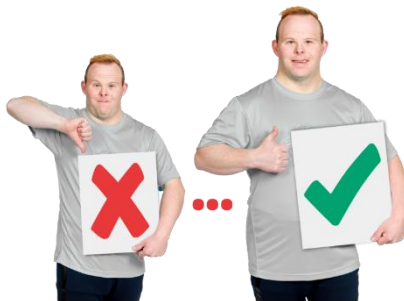
New homes should be in places that help to keep links with family and community links.



New homes should provide chances for social, educational and job opportunities.



There needs to be a focus on ways to provide better stability of care and support by making sure that the correct staff are employed and that they stay. There should also be better chances for promotion within care and support work.



There should be proper and regular review of support housing to make sure that the needs of residents continues to be met and if needed that more appropriate housing is available. This will make sure that supported housing is being made use of properly.



There should be more expert support services that are designed to meet the needs of people with Autism across D&G. This should be done through planned commissioning and that



makes clear guidance on service standards and best practice



There needs to be more work done around Self Directed Support.



Families need more support too. This will make sure services keep on working.



The role of community based services like ARCs, social enterprises etc. in supporting, training and developing young people should be supported and if possible, widened to provide better access and more choices, especially in more rural parts of D&G.



This report was translated into Easy Read by UCI (User and Carer Involvement)



Contact details



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