



*Linking our Thinking:
Partnership Working in
Northern Ireland*

David Bass NIHE Assistant Director
Design and Property
Nuala McArdle DHSSPS Officer for the
Allied Health Professions



Overview

- Context
- Position in Northern Ireland
- The players and their roles
- Joint Fundamental Review
- The Current Position
- The Challenges Ahead



Why Partnerships?

- Statutory responsibilities
- Strategies and policies
- Individual responsibilities
- Need to collaborate
- Client focus
- Interface responsibilities

Legislative responsibilities

DHSSPS/HPSS

- The Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act (NI) 1978
- The Disabled Persons Act (NI) 1989
- The Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992
- The Children Order 1995
- Guidance on Carers Assessments HSSE 1996

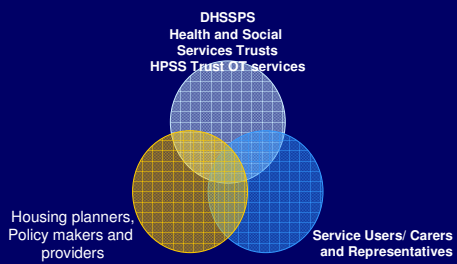
DSD/NIHE

- The Housing (NI) Order(s) 1992, 2003

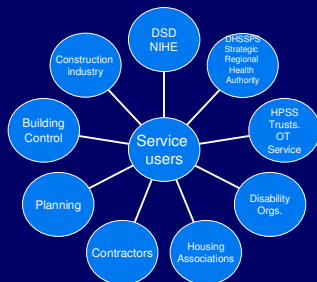
Both Agencies

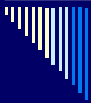
- The Disability Discrimination Act 1995
- The Disability Discrimination Order (NI) 2006
- The Human Rights Act 1998

Key Partners



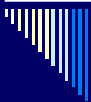
Stakeholders





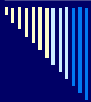
Shared Policies

- Promoting Social Inclusion
- Promoting Independent Living
- Targeting Health and Social Need
- Home accident prevention: Manual Handling
- Community Care/Carers
- Supporting People
- Housing and Health
- Tackling fuel poverty
- Healthy Cities/ Health Action Zones



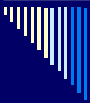
The Joint Fundamental Review: A Shared Challenge, 2000

- Increasing demand for adaptations
- Problems with waiting times
- Problems with coordination
- Escalating Costs
- Issue of requests for changes of heating
- Problems with resources
- Best Value



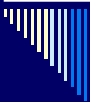
The Joint Fundamental Review: Findings

- Information for service users
- Resources
- Fast tracking
- Timescale for assessment
- Timescale for delivery
- Co-ordination and monitoring (in collaboration)
- Lack of user involvement
- Equity issues across tenure
- Policy impact assessments
- Resourcing adaptation services



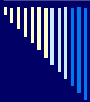
Action

- Reduce waiting times for occupational therapy assessment
- Reduce waiting times for processing and completion of adaptations
- Improve the Quality of Service
- Establish permanent Regional Steering Group



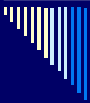
Users Views

- Survey Results 2000
- High levels of satisfaction with completed adaptations – greatly improved independence, satisfaction with builder
- 76% satisfied with service overall but
- Higher dissatisfaction where work not started and significant numbers asking that work be done quicker and better information and advice provided



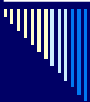
Positive outcomes

- Joint reviews of services
- Innovative problem solving – heating transfer
- Service improvement initiatives – minor works
- Reduction of OT waiting lists – 20 new OT posts
- Housing adaptations liaison manager
- Sharing resources – training and meetings
- Review and abolition of means testing families with disabled children



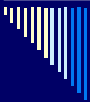
Positive outcomes

- Improved integrated information for service users/providers- step by step guides and website see www.nihe.gov.uk
- Agreed design standards -Inclusive design guide, Wheelchair standard housing.
- IT electronic transfer pilots
- Protocols for joint visits
- Pilot regional fora to develop user involvement networks.
- Strengthened research base supporting policy/practice



Positive Outcomes

- Increased understanding and respect
- Increased commitment to collaborate
- Greater awareness of the need for shared values and goals
- Greater awareness of the need for agreed standards




User involvement:

- Extensive consumer satisfaction studies
- Focus groups
- Participatory research methods - Wheelchair standard housing, Inclusive Design Guide
- Representation on the regional steering group
- Conference focus
- Action plans
- Commitment to develop local networks



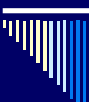
Good practice guides

- Fast tracking
- Interagency communications
- User involvement
- Design standards



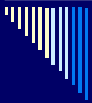
Survey Results 2005/6 compared to 2000

- Still high levels of satisfaction with completed works, builder etc.
- Fewer requests for better information and advice and work to be done quicker
- Work started more quickly in general
- Overall satisfaction levels on completion increased from 76% to 83% but
- Increased levels of dissatisfaction where work not started



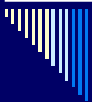
The Current Position

- Changes to the DFG Process
- The Housing Adaptations Liaison Manager
- Developing Partnership Agreements
- Standards and guidance to support collaborative working



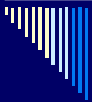
The DFG Process

- Change in starting point
- Clarification of roles of Trusts and Housing Executives
- Housing Executive takes no action until recommendation received, then takes fast track approach
- New timescales and targets

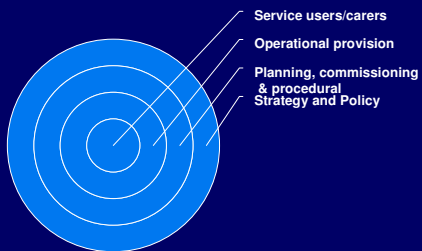


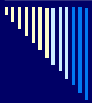
Housing Adaptations Liaison Manager

- Policy and Practice
- Planning and Organisation
- Research
- Training
- User involvement
- Quality Improvement
- IT Development
- Liaison



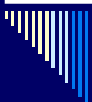
The Partnership Agreements:





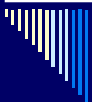
Partnership Agreements: Strategic and Policy Issues

- User involvement in planning and reviewing
- Determining need
- Planning and commissioning to meet needs
- Providing and deploying resources
- Monitoring and accounting for performance
- Reviewing housing solutions



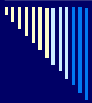
Partnership Agreements: The Planning, Commissioning and Procedural Level

- User involvement framework
- Gathering information to support planning
- Ensuring service delivery
- Identifying and allocating resources
- Providing framework for reporting performance



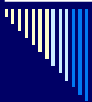
Partnership Agreements: Performance Issues and Service Users' Expectations

- Methodology**
- Identify users' requirements
- 'The service user has the right to expect'*
- Identify methods of meeting these requirements
- Identify methods of measuring success
- Identify performance indicators



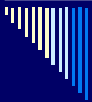
Partnership Agreements: Service Users' Expectations

- To receive a high quality seamless service
- To have access to information and advice
- To receive timely and appropriate individual assessment
- To be kept informed and supported throughout the process



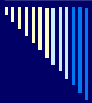
Partnership Agreements: Service Users' Expectations

- The service to be informed and guided by the decision of the individual
- A solution tailored to individual need developed and delivered in a timely fashion
- Information to be provided on what to do after the work is completed
- Service Improvements to be influenced by service users' experience



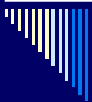
The Realities of Partnership Working

- Not easy
- Must be nurtured
- Requires formal and informal arrangements
- Needs mutual respect and understanding
- Ongoing journey
- Shared vision
- Dedicated resources
- Essential and
- Very worthwhile



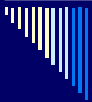
Characteristics of a Good Partnership Agreement

- Identifies key stakeholders
- Clarifies strategic, policy planning and operational responsibilities and communications arrangements
- Agreed performance indicators
- Underpinned by research and interagency good practice guides in key areas.
- Builds in user involvement
- Can withstand organisational change



Commitments for the Future

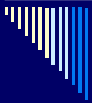
- Partnership agreements to replace service agreements
- Joint policy impact assessments
- Policy development
- Strengthen interagency communications and coordination – IT
- Strengthen user involvement
- Identify joint research and audits
- Identify and meet training needs
- Evaluate new technologies
- Underpin with good practice guides



All set against the challenge of

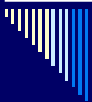
...

- The Review of Public Administration

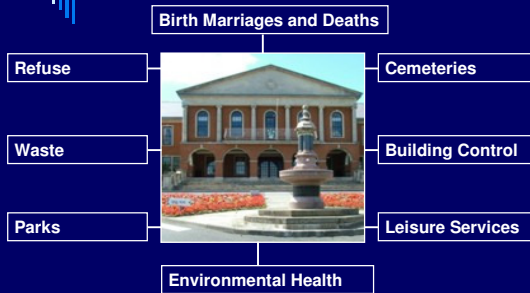


Health and Social Services changes under RPA

- Changed role for DHSS&PS
- New Health and Social Services Authority
- Five new Trusts
- Seven local commissioning groups

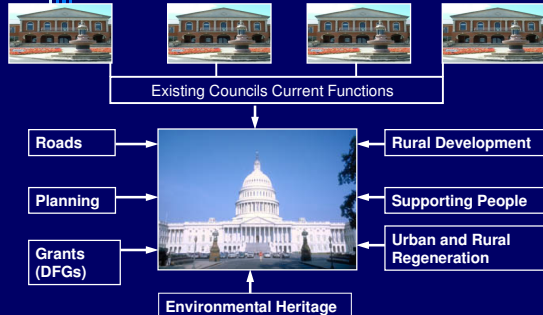


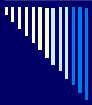
Existing Councils - Functions





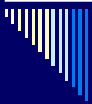
New "Super" Councils



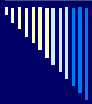


Future priorities: Considerations

- Review of Public Administration
- Devolution of housing powers to councils
- Local v central government funding
- Modernising Services
- Equity issues
- Even more important to have good partnership agreements supported by agreed standards

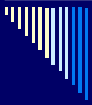


The end



Supporting research/publications

- Northern Ireland Housing Executive (2002, 2006) Welfare Adaptations Survey. Belfast: Northern Ireland Housing Executive
- Blythe, A. McDaid, S. O'Brien, P. (2002) *Lifetime Homes in N. Ireland: Evolution or Revolution*. Belfast: Chartered Institute of Housing (NI) & Joseph Rowntree Foundation.
- Northern Ireland Housing Executive, Department of Health Social Services and Public Safety (2003) *Joint Fundamental Review of the Housing Adaptations Service*. Belfast: Northern Ireland Housing Executive.
- DHSSPS/NIHE (2002) *Adapting your Home: A Step-by-Step Guide for People with Disabilities*. Belfast: Northern Ireland Housing Executive.
- NIHE/University of Ulster (2003) *Inclusive Design through Housing Adaptations: A Good Practice Guide*. Belfast: Northern Ireland Housing Executive
- O'Brien, P. (2003) Disabled facilities grants: are they meeting the assessed needs of children in Northern Ireland? *British Journal Of Occupational Therapy*, 66(6) 277-280
- O'Brien P. (2004) Abolition Welcomed by COTSSIH. *Occupational Therapy News*. 12(1), 21.



Supporting research/publications

- O'Brien (2003, 2004) cited in Awang D (2004) *Building in evidence: reviewing housing and occupational therapy*. London: College of Occupational Therapists.
- McKeever B, O'Brien P(2004) Video: "Don't box me in" Derry: Nerve Centre
- O'Brien P (2006) Access standards: evolution of inclusive housing in: Clutton S, Grisbrook J, Pengelly (eds.) *Occupational Therapy in Housing; Building on Firm Foundations*. London: Wiley.
- McKeown K, O'Brien P, O'Connor G (2006) *Wheelchair User Housing Study: The experiences of wheelchair users and the evolution of housing design standards*. Belfast: Northern Ireland Housing Executive. (In press)
- McKeever B (2006) *Making the Impossible Possible*. Derry: Guildhall Press.
