

# The Ageing Communities Excellence Network

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## Pursuing excellence in older people's housing services

Mapping out the service

### ■ Monthly

- Email updates
- Briefing papers.

### ■ Quarterly

- Audit Commission positive practice updates.

### ■ Annually

- Benchmarking survey
- Older people's housing services conference
- Sheltered housing toolkit updated
- Extra care housing toolkit updated
- Regional best practice workshops.

**ACEnet is provided by HQN, a leading provider of information, training and consultancy for housing organisations and their partners, offering high quality services at outstanding value – visit [www.hqnetwork.co.uk](http://www.hqnetwork.co.uk) for further information on our services.**

## Ensuring older people's housing services are fit for the future

ACEnet (the Ageing Communities Excellence Network) is a specialist HQN network providing subscribers with:

- Annual benchmarking of key data and best practice member surveys, covering important service areas
- Monthly email updates capturing all the knowledge, ideas and changes in older people's housing
- Bespoke briefings covering key issues, commissioned from experts and uniquely available to ACEnet members
- Access to ACEnet's sheltered housing toolkit
- Access to ACEnet's extra care housing toolkit
- Question and answer briefings on key issues identified by members. You ask the questions: we provide the answers
- Positive practice papers based on Audit Commission inspection findings
- Rapid response email support and networking service – to respond to queries, find out what others are doing, share problems and ideas and explore issues that are important to service users
- Low cost best practice workshops at regional venues
- Discounted places at ACEnet's annual older people's housing services conference and HQN events relating to older people's housing.

Read on to find out more.

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## Everything you need to achieve excellence in older people's housing services

HQN has an established and recognised position as a provider of robust information and advice to social housing providers. We have been benchmarking sheltered housing for six years, progressively refining and improving what we do to take account of Supporting People and the Audit Commission KLOEs to ensure our members are best equipped to work towards top performance.

### Benchmarking

Our annual benchmarking exercise is supplemented by member surveys on HR; continuous improvement and Supporting People reviews; tenant profiles.

### Updates and briefings

We recognise that changes in the policy environment have posed significant challenges to providers of sheltered housing and other older people's housing services in recent years. We have therefore extended our services beyond benchmarking by introducing updates and briefings and have enlarged our policy range from sheltered housing to older people's housing services more generally.

## Robust analysis of trends and new policy initiatives

Our members need to know how to demonstrate efficiency and value for money in the services they provide; they want advice on conducting stock options appraisals; and information about new models of provision and changes to staff roles. Some want help with delivering service improvements. For all of these reasons, having access to up-to-date information about what is happening in the sector has never been so important. Knowing how you compare is also critical in identifying areas for review and delivering service improvements. Together with robust analysis of trends and new policy initiatives, ACEnet supports providers to help ensure that their older people's housing services are fit for purpose – and meet or even exceed both your own and service users' objectives and expectations.

### Additional support

We offer ACEnet subscribers discounted consultancy which is tailored to meet each organisation's specific requirements.

Examples include:

- Options appraisals
- Reviews and development of models of provision
- Training for staff
- Help with service charges
- Older person's housing strategy development.

## Our team

**Paul Stead** is HQN's Head of Central Services and Manager of ACEnet. Paul has extensive experience of managing sheltered housing, including 13 years at Anchor Trust, where his last position was Head of Quality. Since 2001, Paul has worked in various interim management roles and has carried out a number of inspections as an affiliate housing inspector with the Audit Commission.

**Lesley Healey**, HQN Associate, was an assistant director of social services with responsibilities including corporate lead for shared priorities for older people and Supporting People. She was previously a group manager with responsibilities including Supporting People and for commissioning care, support and housing services. She also managed and developed specialist housing, support services and adaptations.

**Tony Huff** is our lead finance Associate. He is a former head of finance for housing and adult care services. He was involved in the initial introduction of Supporting People at Leeds City Council providing financial support to the commissioning body as well as providing direct financial support to adult care services in another role. Tony has also worked extensively with local authorities, housing associations and ALMOs in undertaking stock options studies and efficiency reviews.

**Paul Smith** is our data analyst. Paul has a background in operational research and was a project manager for the Audit Commission on studies of housing and Standard Spending Assessments. He now works as a consultant, specialising in IT, and supports strategic software for the Audit and Healthcare Commissions.

**Steve Partridge**, HQN Executive Director (Finance) is a former Finance Director who has worked extensively with local authorities, housing associations and ALMOs in undertaking stock options studies and efficiency reviews. He has also provided detailed advice on the implications of Supporting People and changes to the funding regime.

**Lydia Dlaboha**, HQN Executive Director (Performance Improvement) leads our service improvement consultancy work. She has led a number of sheltered housing stock options studies and numerous reviews of older people's housing services.

Our Networks team administers the service, processing all subscription enquiries and handling all day-to-day contact with members.

## Membership fees

Details of the ACEnet membership fees for 12 months' subscription can be found in the enclosed joining form. Discounts are available for organisations that are already members of other HQN networks. If you would like further details please email: [acenet@hqnetwork.co.uk](mailto:acenet@hqnetwork.co.uk) or call us on **0845 4747 004**.

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## JOIN NOW!

ACEnet – everything you need to achieve excellence in older people’s housing services.

Name	
Job title	
Organisation	
Address	
	Postcode
Telephone no.	
Email address	

How did you hear about the network?
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ACEnet membership – 12 months’ subscription is £820 plus VAT at the applicable rate and I understand that I will be invoiced for this amount upon receipt of my joining form.

Signature
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ACEnet is one of a range of specialist networks run by HQN, a leading provider of consultancy and training, designed to help you to achieve real and lasting improvements in your services.

Discounts are available for organisations that are already members of other HQN networks. If you would like further details, please email [acenet@hqnetwork.co.uk](mailto:acenet@hqnetwork.co.uk) or call us on **0845 4747 004**.

Please return to: HQN Limited, Rockingham House, St Maurice’s Road, York YO31 7JA

Please note that network membership is for individual organisations (or groups) and the staff employed by those organisations (or groups). Tenants and board members/councillors linked to the organisation/group that holds network membership can also access all member benefits, including the website password and published briefings. Members must not share any member benefits with other organisations who are not network members, as this devalues the benefits of membership for paying members. This includes sharing the password and the forwarding of emails, briefing papers or other documents to non-member organisations. HQN reserves the right to terminate network membership in cases of a breach of this code. We are, of course, happy for members to refer to network publications at meetings, etc. If further clarification is required, please contact [hqn@hqnetwork.co.uk](mailto:hqn@hqnetwork.co.uk) and your enquiry will be forwarded to the relevant network manager.

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