

Why the Older People's Housing Taskforce Report Should Be the Centrepiece of Housing Policy

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DLUHC & DHSC

Taskforce Members

Academics, All Party Parliamentary Group, Architects, Older people charities, Housing operators, Investment, Learning & Improvement Network, Legal experts, Lived experience, Local councils, National representative bodies

Taskforce mission

To understand the market in England for older people's housing today and into the future; the enablers for older people when seeking to move into appropriate or specialist housing; opportunities and benefits of broadening provision and choice for older people, including continuing to live in their own home if they wish to do so; and to develop a viable and implementable approach for enhancing choice for older people in the housing market.

How we approached our task

Site visits (n=36), Call for evidence (n=178), Surveys (n=5), conversations (n=>100 key industry leaders), Roundtables (n=15)

Research

- Basis Social - seven face-to-face focus groups - adults aged 55+ living across different parts of England, and according to a range of demographic characteristics.
 - Kantar Public – desktop research - consumer demand, affordability, stimulating supply, and uptake of various OPH models.
 - Strategic Planning Research Unit - analysed over 2,210 OPH planning applications (understanding of the patterns and trends in success or otherwise)
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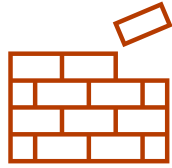
Call for evidence

- Suitability and availability of housing choices for senior citizens
- Advice, Information and Guidance
- Planning and Local Placemaking
- Age and Dementia Friendly Design
- Health, Wellbeing and Social Care
- Geographical Location
- The Role of Technology

The state of older people's housing in England today



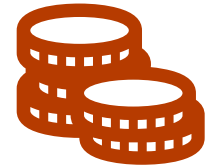
Our older population is growing and becoming more diverse. Over 65's are 18.6% of our pop'n (up 2% points in ten years) with 8% born outside the UK.



We need an estimated 30-50,000 new later living homes *per annum* to meet this growth – but only build around 7,000 a year



Nearly 9 in 10 people aged 65-79 live in under-occupied housing, with over 50% living in homes with two or more excess bedrooms



New research by the Taskforce shows current private leasehold OPH options are unaffordable for the majority of English households aged 75 years and over.



Around 0.6% live in Housing with Care in the UK – a tenth of the proportion in more mature markets such as the USA, Australia and New Zealand.



The vast majority of over 65s - more than nine out of ten - currently live in mainstream housing – risk individual health benefits of OPH & potential to save costs due to avoidable hospital admissions.



Only 12% of older people had level access at the entrance of their building; less than half a bathroom on the entry level of their home.



Older people are unaware of the options available to them and admit to 'burying their heads' as to their future housing needs.

Recommendations

Our full report dedicates a chapter to each of the following recommendations. We set out detailed actions under each – actions for Government, the Industry and Local Systems – with the evidence and stakeholder insight underpinning them.

Standardise definitions of OPH/LLH

(Chapter 1) – Because to enable partnership working across the private and public sectors and to build public understanding of what's available, we need to be speaking the same language.

Incentivise a wide range of OPH/LLH options

(Chapter 2) – Because older people in the UK are not a homogenous group. They are highly diverse in their needs, wishes, backgrounds and identities. Meaningful choice must be available and accessible to all.

Ensure more housing is designed for later life

(Chapter 3) – Because we need to optimise the design of all forms of OPH, to improve the accessibility of new build mainstream housing, and make existing mainstream housing more suitable for older people.

Create age-friendly, dementia-inclusive, faith and culture-sensitive communities

(Chapter 4) – Because the community beyond the front door - the built environment, local infrastructure, communities and mutual support - enables people to live independently and well.

Expand OPH/LLH at scale and ensure it is affordable to live in, and viable to finance, build and operate

(Chapter 5) – Because to increase supply, we need to create greater incentives for private investment, including capital support; thereby enabling a more affordable 'low to middle affluence market'.

Strengthen planning policies

(Chapter 6) – Because national and local planning policy and practice can incentivise and accelerate the development of new specialised housing; and help shape mainstream housing and the built environment to be more age-friendly.

Establish a national information platform and local hubs

(Chapter 7) – Because for people to take up options they must first understand what they offer, what would best meet their needs, the health benefits and how to take them up. Accurate and trusted sources are vital.

Build consumer confidence

(Chapter 8) – Because to increase demand we need to build consumer trust and confidence in a range of OPH tenures; and to increase supply we need to provide regulatory clarity for investors, developers and operators. A new regulated Tenure would enable protection and incentive, if designed well.

Enhance innovation, research and professional development

(Chapter 9) – Because there are gaps in our knowledge of older people's needs and what works to meet them. A strategic approach is needed to generate and embed the greatest value from private and publicly funded research, with an increase in funding for the latter.

Create collective leadership to drive change

(Chapter 10) – Because to achieve a step change, we need to inspire and empower ambitious action, from the top of Government and outwards to communities and families. We need to fully integrate housing, health & social care at all levels of the system

Call for a **Long-term Housing Strategy for an Ageing Population**, that promotes *all types of age-friendly, dementia-inclusive, faith and culture-sensitive homes/communities* and calls the *integration of housing, health and social care* to enable its delivery.
To achieve this, everyone needs to:

**Think
housing**

The OPHT report recommended that professionals within the Health & Social Care sectors need to think housing. Incorporate housing in broader DHSC policies

**Address
ageing**

Housing and Place-making should be designed to meet the needs of a genuinely ageing population. Delivery of homes for younger families is helpful but freeing up under occupied homes would be significantly more beneficial if more age-appropriate homes are delivered.

**Promote
wellbeing**

Housing and public realm must support both physical and mental health. Principles of activity should specifically aim to connect the community and minimise social isolation.

**Create
inclusive
communities**

Foster communities that are accessible, inclusive and supportive. New settlements, urban extensions and urban mixed-use developments should foster principles of inclusivity outlined in Chapter 4 of the OPHT report.

Housing policy needs a fundamental rethink of how it can both generate more lower to middle-affluence market housing that is age-friendly and inclusive and create a buoyant OPH/LLH market that will attract a later life move, avoiding potential crises in the future. This includes:

- ***The right move*** - access to independent advice, information and advocacy in every local authority and packages to assist.
- ***The right choice*** - a greater diversity of tenure choice – from discounted market sale/low-cost homeownership, deferred fee models, lifetime leases, and shared ownership to social and private rental.
- ***The right size*** – a better range of attractive contemporary, technology-enabled housing designed to updated HAPPI principles.
- ***The right place*** – improved age-friendly and inclusive housing and planning policies and local plans.

Later Living Homes/Housing Typology

Mainstream homes/housing	Community-led homes/housing	Service-led homes/housing with support	Service-led homes/housing with care	Care homes
e.g., existing, new build and adapted homes, rightsizing homes, bungalows, stacked bungalows with lift. Presentation title	e.g., Alms houses, Co-housing, collaborative housing, Shared Lives, home	e.g., sheltered homes, independent living or retirement apartments and sometimes bungalows.	e.g., extra care, assisted living, integrated retirement communities, retirement villages.	e.g., residential and nursing homes.

Ensure more homes/housing is designed for later life



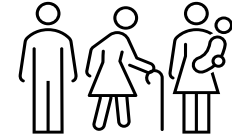
Diverse Housing Types:

There is a need for more of all types of Older People's Housing (OPH) and Later Life Housing (LLH) to cater to the varied needs of the ageing population.



Ageing in Place:

Support ageing in place by building age-friendly and inclusive homes as part of mainstream practice. This approach helps older people remain in their communities and maintain their independence.



Intergenerational Needs:

Housing should meet the needs of older and younger people, ensuring that the design and functionality of homes are suitable for all age groups. Brining older and younger people together by design will help to create thriving communities.

Our vision for now...Not for the future

In Summary:

- **Interconnected Planning:** Housing, health, and social care must be planned jointly to improve outcomes for older people.
- **Age-Friendly Design:** More housing should be designed for later life, supporting ageing in place and intergenerational needs.
- **Community Focus:** Creating age-friendly, dementia-inclusive, faith and culture-sensitive communities is essential.
- **Standard Definitions:** Standardising OPH/LLH definitions and integrating them into general housing can attract new entrants and avoid niche perception.
- **Collective Leadership:** A long-term National Housing Strategy for an Ageing Population is needed, with collective leadership to drive change

Centre piece of housing policy



How OPHT report fits with Government's Five Missions

1. Kickstart economic growth – to drive growth, **rebuild Britain for ageing population**, support good jobs, **unlock investment**, and improve living standards across the country.
 2. Make Britain a clean energy superpower through delivering **clean power by 2030** and accelerating to **net zero – modernising old homes & building new**.
 3. Take back our streets by **halving serious violent crime** and **raising confidence in the police** and criminal justice system to its highest levels – **safe, age-friendly & inclusive communities**.
 4. Break down barriers to opportunity by **reforming our childcare and education systems**, to make sure there is no class ceiling on the ambitions of our young people – **new jobs in Housing, Health & Social Care**.
 5. Build an **NHS fit for the future** that is there when people need it, where everyone lives well for longer – **connected communities would reduce cost for NHS and need for Social Care**.
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