

# The Big Issue

## Housing and Ageing

**Living independently in a home of their own choosing – this is the simple aspiration of the majority of people as they grow older.**



At a time of unprecedented demographic change, creating homes and neighbourhoods that enable older people to remain independent, economically active and involved with their friends, neighbours, family and local community has never been more important.

In the face of major fiscal pressures, opportunities to reduce the cost of health and social care for older people must be grasped.

Housing provides that opportunity.

**This brochure, produced by the Housing and Ageing Alliance, outlines the case for action by national and local government.**



***“The time has come for a new national effort to build the homes and create the environments that will meet our needs as we all grow older”***

Housing Our Ageing Population:  
Panel for Innovation

***“...housing can contribute to better service integration and better outcomes for older people at less cost”***

***‘Good homes in which to grow old’*** Local Government Group

# The Big Issue: Housing and Ageing

## A Big Issue for Social Care

### Why?

- Over the next 20 years the number of people over 85 years will double<sup>1</sup>
- Over two thirds (69%) of this age group have a disability or limiting long-standing illness and a growing number have dementia<sup>1</sup>

### Smarter Spending

- *Support independent living at home through personalised, community based care, support and re-ablement. Implement prevention programmes to reduce care demand*
- *Involve housing in plans for the future funding of care being developed by the Commission*
- *Develop a range of retirement and supported living options as an alternative to residential and hospital care*

## A Big Issue for Health

### Why?

- Many of the most common chronic health conditions (heart disease, stroke, respiratory conditions, arthritis) have a causal link to housing conditions<sup>2</sup>
- Almost two thirds of general and acute hospital beds are occupied by people over 65<sup>3</sup>

£35,100 pays for one nursing home place<sup>4</sup>

£35,000 provides 200 older people with minor adaptations help<sup>5</sup>

£1 billion – the annual cost of falls amongst older people in the UK<sup>6</sup>

£30,000 – the cost of one hip fracture<sup>7</sup>

£4,000 – the cost in extra home care hours of a year's delay in home adaptations<sup>8</sup>



### Smarter Spending

- *Fast track home adaptations and repairs, incorporating falls prevention measures, should become a core part of all health and social care provision<sup>9</sup>*
- *Integrate housing options advice and housing related support into hospital discharge systems and public health prevention programmes*
- *Involve public health in planning healthier homes and neighbourhoods for all ages*

## A Big Issue for Housing and Planning

### Why?

- Nearly a third of all homes are already lived in by people over retirement age<sup>10</sup>
- Older people will account for nearly half of new household growth by 2026<sup>11</sup>

### Smarter Spending

- *Future proof all new homes, thereby saving money in the longer term, by building in features that enable people to live independently across the lifespan*
- *Invest in housing related support and existing housing stock to enable independence*
- *Upgrade current provision, plan for and build a range of aspirational retirement and supported housing options for older people across the private and social rented sectors*

# The Big Issue: Housing and Ageing

## A Big Issue for a Big Society?

### Why?

- Over a million older people feel socially isolated<sup>12</sup>
- Most older people just need *'that little bit of help'* to stay living independently<sup>13</sup>
- If older people's homes fall into disrepair there is an impact on the whole neighbourhood

### Smarter Spending

- *Develop housing and neighbourhoods that foster community involvement eg through good intergenerational planning and design for all ages*
- *Introduce simple, low cost 'Lifetime Neighbourhoods' features such as more public seating, better lighting and more public toilets<sup>14</sup>*



## A Big Issue for Families and Carers

### Why?

- Most paid and unpaid care takes place in older people's own homes. The suitability of the home can make or break families' and carers' ability to look after their loved one<sup>15</sup>
- For most people their home is at the heart of their wellbeing and happiness and, for the majority of home owners, their most important financial asset<sup>16</sup>

### Smarter Spending

- *Provision of independent, impartial advice and information about housing and care options can help people to make best use of their available resources and make informed choices about their housing in later life<sup>17</sup>*
- *Continue to support and develop the national, independent housing and care advice service, FirstStop, which enables self help and housing decisions in later life*

## A Big Issue for Older People?

- Older people consider housing to be one of the most essential factors determining whether they will be able to manage and live well in later life<sup>16</sup>
- Warmth, safety, security and transport are important housing priorities for older people<sup>18</sup>
- Being in control of where and how you live as you get older is critical to independence and well-being<sup>19</sup>

# The Big Issue: Housing and Ageing

## A Big Issue for the Coalition's Programme for Government

### Why?

It meets the Coalition commitments:

*"We will help elderly people live at home for longer through solutions such as home adaptations and community support programmes."* (p.25)

*"We will publish and present to Parliament a simple and consolidated national planning framework covering all forms of development and setting out national economic, environmental and social priorities."* (p.11)

- 80% of people over 85 years live in mainstream housing <sup>1, 19</sup>
- 75% of people over retirement age are home owners, around half living on low incomes <sup>20</sup>



### Smarter Spending

- Link fast, efficient delivery of housing related support and home adaptations to the emerging plans for health and social care
- Make planning for demographic change a key objective in the new national planning framework, including building new housing for an ageing population

## This brochure is produced by the Housing and Ageing Alliance

The Housing and Ageing Alliance believes that homes, communities and housing related services should be planned and designed in ways that enable choice, control, inclusion and independence in later life.

The Housing and Ageing Alliance members are drawn from a wide spectrum of national organisations committed to improving the housing and living conditions of older people including: Age UK, Care & Repair England, Chartered Institute of Housing, Counsel and Care, Elderly Accommodation Counsel, Foundations, Hanover, Housing 21, HBF Retirement Housing Group, McCarthy & Stone Retirement Lifestyles Ltd, National Housing Federation, Older People's Action Groups (London and North East).

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**References** **(1)** HMG (2009) Shaping the Future of Care Together HMSO London, **(2)** Blackman T (2005) Housing Risks and Health Inequalities DH London **(3)** DH (2001) National Service Framework for Older People DH London **(4)** Laing and Buisson (2008 Survey) **(5)** Care & Repair Cymru (2006) RRAP Cardiff **(6)** Scuffham, P, Chaplin, S and Legodd, R (2003) 'Incidence and costs of unintentional falls in older people in the UK' Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health 57 740-744. **(7)** Parrott, S (2000) The economic cost of hip fracture in the UK York: University of York **(8)** Heywood, F and Turner (2007) Better Outcomes, Lower Costs ODI **(9)** Allen K & Glasby J (2010) HMSC Policy Paper 8 University of Birmingham **(10)** ONS (2008) Census **(11)** ONS/GAD 2008 National Projections **(12)** Help the Aged (2008) Isolation and Loneliness HtA **(13)** JRF (2005) That little bit of help York **(14)** WHO (2007) Global Age Friendly Cities Geneva WHO **(15)** CarersUK **(16)** Clough R et al (2003) Homing in on Housing Lancaster ESR **(17)** HOPDEV (2006) Housing Advice and Information for Older People London **(18)** Audit Commission (2004) Independence and Well-being London AC **(19)** CLG (Annual) Survey of English Housing London CLG **(20)** Wilcox S (2010) UK Housing Review CIH/ CML

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