



Setting Standards for
Retirement Communities

29 March 2021

The Rt Hon Boris Johnson MP
10 Downing Street
Westminster
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Dear Prime Minister,

Older people in the UK are living longer – but not healthier for longer.

That is why we need to find a modern solution to the modern phenomenon of longevity. Representing a broad coalition of older people's representatives, policymakers, private sector and civil society leaders, we are calling on you to expand the supply of housing and care options in the UK.

Just as previous decades saw the expansion of the care home and home care sectors, there is now a new consensus that the 2020s need to be the decade of housing-with-care (such as extra care housing and retirement villages providing care and support) – not least because of how this sector has proved itself in successfully shielding residents from Covid-19 over the last twelve months.

Yet this option is only available to a tiny fraction of the UK's population – only 0.6% of the over-65s live in housing-with-care settings, about one tenth of the levels seen in countries such as the US, Australia and New Zealand. Increasing UK provision to only a third of these levels would result in more than a £100bn of economic activity, create 40,000 jobs, save the NHS and social care systems billions of pounds and see more than 100,000 family homes freed up.

Proposals for social care *funding* reform have been repeatedly pushed back, but we say that expanding social care *options* must start now: by creating a world-class system of housing-with-care that couples a focus on independence and prevention with a safety net of care services and consumer protection. This would sit alongside and complement existing care options such as care homes and home care, creating more choice for older people.

To achieve this, we must look beyond the remit of the Department of Health and Social Care: multiple departments and ministries will need to work together to join up planning policy, funding (for those with moderate means) and a regulatory framework in a true cross-governmental effort, for example in

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the form of a task force. Crucially, this would be a low-cost initiative bringing transformative effects, at a time when the Government has been spending to fight Covid-19 and boost the economy.

Announcing this commitment and setting up the mechanisms for growth would be a profoundly positive statement of the Government's intent to improve choices for our ageing population. The decade ahead can and must be a brighter one.

Yours sincerely,

Parliamentarians

- Damian Green MP (Conservatives)
- Rosie Cooper MP (Labour)
- Lord Shipley (LibDem)
- Lord Best (Crossbench)
- Lord Foulkes of Cumnock (Labour)
- Dr. Lisa Cameron MP (SNP)
- Lord Cormack (Conservatives)
- Lord Alton (Crossbench)
- Lord Bird (Crossbench)
- Bob Blackman MP (Conservatives)
- Baroness Blackstone (Independent Labour)
- Siobhain McDonagh MP (Labour)

Researchers & academics

- Baroness Sally Greengross, Chief Executive, International Longevity Centre UK
- Professor Les Mayhew, the Business School (formerly Cass) and Head of Research at International Longevity Centre UK
- Dr James Brown, Aston Research Centre for Healthy Ageing
- Judy Martin, Chair, Global Ageing Network
- Sir Muir Gray, Visiting Professor, Nuffield Department of Primary Care Health Sciences, University of Oxford and Director, Oxford Optimal Ageing Programme

Trade associations

- Melanie Leech, Chief Executive, British Property Federation
- Jane Townson, Chief Executive, UK Homecare Association
- Professor Martin Green, Chief Executive, Care England



- Vic Rayner, Executive Director, National Care Forum
- Kate Henderson, Chief Executive, National Housing Federation
- Cllr David Fothergill, Adult Social Care Spokesman, County Councils Network
- Nick Sanderson, Chair, Associated Retirement Community Operators (ARCO)
- Jeremy Porteus, Chief Executive, Housing Learning and Improvement Network
- Huw Edwards, CEO, UKActive

Organisations representing the interests of older people

- Caroline Abrahams, Charity Director, Age UK
- Judy Downey, Chair, Relatives and Residents Association
- Paul Cann, OBE, Co-founder, Campaign to End Loneliness
- Deborah Alsina MBE, Chief Executive, Independent Age
- Lisa Ray, General Secretary, Civil Service Pensioners' Alliance
- Eamonn Donaghy, CEO, National Federation of Occupational Pensioners
- Stephen Burke, Director, United for All Ages

Charities delivering services to older people

- Jane Ashcroft CBE, Chief Executive, Anchor Hanover Group
- Mick Laverty, Chief Executive, Extra Care Charitable Trust
- Sam Monaghan, Chief Executive, Methodist Homes for the Aged
- Bruce Moore, Chief Executive, Housing21
- John Galvin, Chief Executive, Elderly Accommodation Counsel (EAC)
- Steve Allen, Chief Executive, Friends of the Elderly

Health & social care infrastructure investors

- Nigel Wilson, Chief Executive, Legal & General
- Justin Travlos, Country Head UK & Ireland, AXA Investment Management