



Our two popular sites  
are now combined

**HousingCare.org**  
Information for older people

**FirstStop**  
Advice for older people

Home

Accommodation

Home services

Reading

FirstStop advice

For providers

Help

## Accommodation

Search for retirement housing & care homes,  
over 40,000 facilities online!

Search for:  All  Housing  Care homes

Options:  Show results on a map

Search by:  Postcode  Place  Keywords

Enter keywords

Search

Use our **ADVANCED SEARCH**



## Home Services

Search for services that help older people live  
independently at home

Search for:

Any service type

Search by:  Postcode  Place

Step 1: Select a country

Use our **ADVANCED SEARCH**



**FirstStop**

**0800 377 70 70**

EAC's advice line,  
always here to help



# EAC HousingCare update, Spring 2013

[www.HousingCare.org](http://www.HousingCare.org) is the UK's most popular website for those looking for accommodation and services for older people. Visited by 20,000 users every day, it features all specialist housing and care homes as well as an increasing number of home care/support services. We rely on your co-operation to maintain this unique public resource.

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### 1. "Comments about..."

#### New service causes some anxieties

There has been a mixed reaction from providers to the introduction of user comments on the site. Most accept the new feature as inevitable, some as desirable. But there is also apprehension about possible

misuse. Here we explain how EAC manages the service to minimise the risks.

#### Comments about Primrose Court

"I have lived in Primrose court for two years. I love it here. I am in one apartment big enough for me. I have my own front door, I get the sun in the morning in my kitchen and the sun shines in my living room in the afternoon. I have the shops across the road. I have Willow my cat to keep me company. Thank you I'm home."

04/04/2013

Enid (currently lives here)

reply

Add your own comment

"Comments about..." are intended to complement and enhance the details of each housing and care home record. Contributions are invited from past and present residents, visitors, relatives, staff and others.

#### TripAdvisor?

We have given a great deal of thought to how to manage the new service. Whilst the ubiquitous TripAdvisor works well for the hospitality industry, we consider that model inadequate for our purpose for two main reasons:

- Most commentators on hotels or restaurants have had previous experience

of such establishments and are communicating with an equally well informed public. This is generally not the case for retirement housing and care homes.

- Each retirement housing scheme or care homes has only a limited number of 'users', and comments may be few and far between. Individual comments may therefore assume so much importance that providers oppose their publication.



### How we manage Comments

Our service draws on our expertise in delivering independent information and advice, and works as follows:

- All comments are moderated before they are cleared to appear on the site.
- Positive comment are then displayed and the provider *notified*.
- We moderate negative comments, act as intermediary between commentator and provider, and seek to broker a resolution.
- We always seek a response from the provider. If we decide to publish the comments, will also display that response.

We intend to promote this service and hope that you see it as a positive addition to HousingCare's presentation of care and housing facilities. Your suggestions would be welcome. You may decide to encourage your residents and their relatives to use it to enter positive comments. We welcome these, but are becoming skilled at filtering self-promotional material!

Contact [alex.billeter@eac.org.uk](mailto:alex.billeter@eac.org.uk) or phone 020 7820 1682

## 2. Housing Awards 2013

### A brilliant response to this UK- wide resident consultation

In the last few months, some 1500 retirement housing residents have already nominated their schemes for the **EAC National Housing for Older People Awards 2013**, indicating

that this year will see the highest participation to date.

The nomination process, the popular card game, is now a full resident consultation service (RCS), supplying each scheme with a confidential report analysing the residents' ratings.

### Deadline 30th June

There is still plenty of time, so make sure your residents and managers don't miss this opportunity. Your options are to:

- Alert them to look at the Awards details on [HousingCare.org](http://HousingCare.org) – and to go for it.
- Distribute Awards posters and leaflets free from EAC) to your schemes and let them order the consultation packs if they wish.
- Inform your managers and residents that they can order the consultation packs and that the costs will be met by head office.
- Order the consultation packs and ask EAC to post them to your schemes.

Each of these methods is currently used by providers.



The cost of the packs includes the confidential Provider Report.

**The Awards' celebrations** will take place on 24<sup>th</sup> September 2013 at the National Motorcycle Museum in Birmingham where we are planning for around 400 guests, half residents of the winning schemes with their managers, the other half housing providers, developers, commissioners, invited guests and the press.

For more information, email [housingawards@eac.org.uk](mailto:housingawards@eac.org.uk) or phone 020 7820 3755.

### 3. Residents' views on display

For schemes whose residents have played the Awards /RCS card game, their profiles on HousingCare highlight only those features residents rated highly.

**Residents' views**

A number of residents have taken part in the [EAC National Housing for Older People Awards](#), or used the [EAC Residents Consultation Service \(RCS\)](#); they have given **top marks** to this scheme for:

✓ Community spirit	✓ Privacy
✓ Convenience of the location	✓ Quality of the building and facilities
✓ Lifestyle	✓ Quality of the garden
✓ Number / size of facilities	✓ Staff role and interaction

Contact [alex.billeter@eac.org.uk](mailto:alex.billeter@eac.org.uk) or phone 020 7820 1682

### 4. Is traditional sheltered housing a thing of the past?

**Make sure your schemes are correctly described on the site**

The impact of the removal of Supporting People funding ring fence in 2009 and the current economic climate are having an effect on the provision of support services for older people.



Have your services to sheltered housing residents changed? Please check your schemes on the website to see if the information is up to date. Have you, for example:-

- Decommissioned schemes, or converted them to Extra Care?
- Changed to a non-residential but scheme based service?

- Changing to a floating support service, dedicated to residents in sheltered schemes?
- Changed to a needs based floating support service not linked to accommodation – or from a housing support service to an intensive housing management service?

Please contact [val.gorter@eac.org.uk](mailto:val.gorter@eac.org.uk) or phone 7820 3755

### 5. Making First Contact

**EAC is working with the Age Action Alliance to highlight new ways to support vulnerable people**

If you are an excluded or vulnerable person, getting access to the right advice and support is crucially important. In many parts of the country 'First Contact' services have made this easier and more effective.

These services are local collaborative projects in which participating agencies undertake to ensure that when they are in touch with someone in the course of their work, they offer the person the opportunity to fill out a short questionnaire about their current needs and concerns. The questionnaire is then processed centrally and the person referred to whichever partner agencies are best able to help.

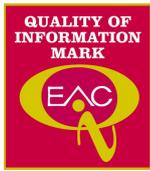
For example, an older couple getting adaptations to their bathroom through a local Home Improvement Agency (HIA) might also be able to get advice on fire safety from the Fire and Rescue Service and information about garden maintenance through their local Age UK.

The Age Action Alliance is a network for partnership working and practical action to improve older people's lives. As a member, EAC is researching the extent and impact of First Contact services throughout the UK with the aim of sharing practice and encouraging new similar initiatives.

To learn more about the research or to share your experience of First Contact services, contact [michael.rodden@eac.org.uk](mailto:michael.rodden@eac.org.uk) or phone 020 7820 3755.

Age Action Alliance website:  
<http://ageactionalliance.org>

## 6. Quality of Information Mark



[www.HousingCare.org](http://www.HousingCare.org) displays the details of over 25,000 UK retirement/ sheltered housing schemes, thanks to hundreds of housing providers who have

completed our basic single page questionnaire.

However those who choose to complete an extended questionnaire are rewarded with the free **EAC Quality of Information Mark (QI Mark)** and an additional 5 web pages per scheme. A QI Mark is valid for 2 years.

Read more about it at:

<http://www.housingcare.org/quality-of-information-mark.aspx>

or email [val.gorter@eac.org.uk](mailto:val.gorter@eac.org.uk) or phone 020 7820 3755

## 7. Advertise your available properties

Some 3,000 individual retirement properties are advertised on HousingCare every week.

Our service is free for individual rental ads uploaded by RSLs, with a subscription service available for high volume users and/or leasehold properties.

Read more about it at:

<http://www.housingcare.org/advertise-housing-vacancies.aspx>

or email [alex.billeter@eac.org.uk](mailto:alex.billeter@eac.org.uk) or phone 020 7820 1682

## 8. Home Services Directory

HousingCare.org is best known for the richness of its retirement housing and care home directories, but its more recent directory of services that help older people maintain independence at home is fast gaining popularity. The Home Services Directory currently contains details of 6,600 services, primarily in England.

### Try it for yourself

Select from 83 services types grouped under 13 main headings such as *Aids & Equipment, Care, Home Help, Home maintenance, Socialising, etc.* Search by postcode, place name, service provider, service type,

keywords – or any combination of these, very much like our accommodation directory.

**You can help** us populate the Home Services Directory by uploading services that you provide, or by directing service providers to the site to upload services themselves, at <http://www.housingcare.org/service/index.aspx>

For more information email [michael.rodden@eac.org.uk](mailto:michael.rodden@eac.org.uk) or phone 020 7820 3755.

## 9. SHOP@, a new analysis tool



In partnership with the Housing LIN, EAC has launched a free online tool to help strategic local planners and commissioners forecast and meet the demand for specialist housing for older people in England.

- Interpret local information
- Predict demand until 2030
- Identify gaps for future investment

Whatever sector you work in, SHOP@ is a must have!

More information at

[www.housinglin.org.uk/SHOPAT](http://www.housinglin.org.uk/SHOPAT)

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