

Report



The development, implementation, consultation process and findings of the first retirement housing awards nominated by the residents



EAC Housing for Older People Awards 2010



Housing Learning and Improvement Network



Report sponsored by



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Acknowledgements

These Awards would not have been possible without the support - financial, administrative or otherwise of a number of organisations and individuals credited on page 34.

The Awards are one of four projects by the **Ministerial Working Group on Sheltered Housing**, the others being:

- **“More than just a few kind words!”** *Reshaping support in sheltered housing: a good practice guide for housing providers and local authorities*
- **Effective Resident Involvement and Consultation in Sheltered Housing:** *A good practice guide for providers and commissioners*
- **Making your voice heard** – *a guide to complaints*

With our thanks to Nationwide Building Society for extending their generous sponsorship of the Awards to the production of this report.

Foreword by Lord Mackenzie

I am delighted to introduce this report on the new *Housing for Older People Awards* - the first awards ever to be nominated by the residents of sheltered and retirement housing. The Awards celebrate housing for older people in all its forms and give residents the opportunity to tell us what matters to them about where they live.

Our strategy for housing in an ageing society, *Lifetime homes, lifetime neighbourhoods*, set out a positive vision for the future of specialist housing for older people and underlined the importance of listening to the voice of residents. The Awards are a natural extension of this work. They showcase successful retirement housing models and give us an important insight into what works and doesn't work for residents.

Each of the 32 awards is determined solely by the people who live in the winning schemes. The nomination process involved consultation with residents on an unprecedented scale through

an innovative card-game to help prompt discussion about their home, the facilities and services available and their quality of life.

This report describes how the Awards were developed and how the new nomination process worked. It distils the key messages from the 2140 residents who took part in the process on what they value about the schemes they live in. The report presents important information for providers of retirement and sheltered housing on what residents really want, and will help shape the future of specialist housing for older people.

I congratulate all the winners and finalists, and I hope that their success will inspire all providers of specialist housing for older people to encourage their residents to take part in next year's Awards.

Lord McKenzie of Luton
*Parliamentary Under Secretary of State,
Communities and Local Government*

Foreword *by Nationwide Building Society*

Nationwide is proud to be partnering with Elderly Accommodation Counsel and sponsoring this year's Housing for Older People Awards.

As the third largest mortgage lender, the issue of housing is core to our business and our members. Therefore as part of our community investment programme we have developed a number of initiatives to promote affordable housing, encourage sustainable communities and support people who are homeless or in housing need. We are pleased to be extending our community investment programme through our partnership with ElderlyAccommodation Counsel.

With an ageing population, sheltered and retirement accommodation is an important consideration for many people across the UK, including our members,

their families and friends. We are fully supportive of EAC's vision to help older people make informed choices about meeting their housing and care needs, and hope our involvement goes some small way to continuously improving accommodation across the UK.

These Awards are a great opportunity to recognise best practice, but most importantly it's a time to listen to residents of sheltered and retirement homes across the UK. We congratulate EAC for their creative approach and look forward to seeing the output of the consultation inform practice over the coming months and years.

Caroline Hallat
*Head of Corporate Responsibility
Nationwide Building Society*

Preface

Sheltered and retirement housing need promoting again. During the last decade housing providers in all sectors, local authorities, and government departments, have quite rightly invested time and money developing new forms of housing for older people – assisted living, retirement villages, extra care housing, and so on. The media spotlight has fallen largely on these new developments, leaving many older people and their families as confused as ever about the essential differences between specialist housing for older people and the traditional *care home*.

In 2010 around 3/4 million people lead an independent life in one form or another of specialist housing for later life. The styles of accommodation, facilities and support or care services on offer

vary from one location to another, providing more choices than ever for many older people. But the different names and descriptions used by providers add to the confusion.

EAC's mission is to make sure older people have the best information to help them decide whether specialist housing is what they want, and if so, which type. This celebration of all forms of retirement housing allows us to listen to what current residents have to say, and helps us understand what information needs to be available to other older people as they make their own choices in turn.

John Galvin
Chief Executive EAC



Introduction and policy context

In the coming decades the UK, along with all industrialised and developing nations, will see unprecedented demographic change, and over the last decade and a half, all departments of Government have raced to engage with the challenges and opportunities this presents.

A key strategy document, *Quality and Choice for Older people's Housing (2001)* was published jointly by the Department of Health (DH) and the forerunner of today's Communities and Local Government Department (CLG). DH's Extra Care *Housing Learning & Improvement Network* (Housing LIN) was set up to promote and fund a new kind of housing provision with integral support and care services for older people, whether they lived in the new housing development or nearby. The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) broadened the debate with its *Opportunity Age* document in 2005 followed by *Building a Society for all Ages* in 2009. This set out the challenges and opportunities of an ageing society, and highlighted the need for a major cultural shift to ensure that we are prepared to meet these challenges and maximise the opportunities. The overriding intention is to ensure that the policy foundations are in place to enable older people both now and in the future to have a good quality of life. Much work has already been done, including the establishment of the Equality and Human Rights Commission in 2007, the National Dementia Strategy (DH, 2009), the National Carers Strategy (DH, 2008), the End of Life Strategy (DH, 2008), and the Partnerships for Older People Projects¹.

Lifetime Homes, Lifetime neighbourhood

Among these initiatives, of particular relevance to the Housing for Older People Awards is *Lifetime Homes, Lifetime Neighbourhoods: A National Strategy for Housing in an Ageing Society* (CLG, 2008). This ambitious and forward thinking strategy clearly sets out the implications of demographic changes for housing, and recognises the massive contribution that housing and neighbourhood can make to supporting older people's health, well-being and independence. The strategy acknowledged the importance of specialist housing for older people and the variety of different types of schemes which, although offering choices, often leads to confusion about what different types of

specialist housing provide. It also signalled the need for a more positive vision for the future of specialist housing to enable this provision to match the changing aspirations and lifestyle choices of coming generations of older people. To move towards promoting this vision a number of projects have since been commissioned, including the work of the *Housing our Ageing Population Panel for Innovation* (HAPPI), and the three recent good practice guides of the *Ministerial Working Group on Sheltered Housing* on transforming support services for older people, the effective involvement of residents in consultation, and on improving complaints procedures.

Specialist housing

The EAC Housing for Older People Awards is part of this raft of projects. The Awards are firmly rooted in the current policy context of developing housing options for our ageing society that reflect the aspirations and lifestyle choices of older people themselves. The intention of the Awards from the very beginning was to provide the opportunity for residents in specialist housing schemes to demonstrate what they value most about the places where they live, to celebrate good practice, and to further our understanding of what works and why.

Specialist housing for older people takes many forms and uses a confusing range of terms. Most people probably have a reasonable idea of what a "traditional" sheltered housing scheme might like, but less understanding of what "extra care" housing is. Some people might confuse both types of provision with care homes or more institutional models of care, which they might only consider suitable for people who are very frail or ill. This confusion is understandable given the range of names given to housing schemes that support older people to live independently in their own home, along with options for additional support and care to facilitate ageing in place. Many also provide opportunities for activities and social networks that can help reduce isolation and feelings of vulnerability.

¹ See: <http://www.hmg.gov.uk/media/34572/workacrossgovernment.pdf>

Introduction and policy context

continued

Research evidence gives a number of consistent and positive messages about specialist housing, but also raises some important questions about what specialist housing can and cannot do, and what it should look like in the future. We know, for example, that the majority of residents in specialist housing schemes are happy with their accommodation and the services that are offered, and believe that such schemes are good options for later life. We know that at the heart of people's decisions to move to such schemes is the combination of independence and security that these offer; and perhaps an unexpected bonus for some is feeling part of a community and having more opportunities for companionship and social activities.

We also know that older residents who have lived in some specialist housing schemes for a long time are fearful of some of the changes that have taken place in their schemes. These changes include the replacement of resident on-site wardens² (or scheme managers) with managers who are

only available for certain hours, and the introduction of alarm systems connected to a central call centre. We also know that some older schemes do not meet current design standards, particularly in terms of accessibility, or offer accommodation that is very small and in some cases difficult to let. As policy has moved in recent years towards providing support and care to people in their own homes in the community, some have questioned the need for specialist provision, while others fiercely defend it.

Providing opportunities

The Housing Awards for Older People complement existing consultation processes by providing opportunities for residents from a broad range of retirement housing across the UK to tell us how they feel about where they live. In the next section of this report we discuss some of the themes that have emerged from analysis of the Awards data and the implications for how housing and related services are provided.

² The terms *Warden* and *Scheme Manager* are used interchangeably throughout this report



The Awards data *facts, figures and findings*

Introduction

This section of the report explores the data that was collected as part of the Awards nomination process in the form of the responses of groups and individuals to a range of statements. This includes an analysis of scores across the four topic areas ('Where we live', 'My home', 'Services' and 'Lifestyle'), overall scores, and design scores. We start by describing the entries that were received for the Awards and then go on to describe how the winning schemes were decided. This is followed by a summary of some of the main themes that have emerged from an initial analysis of the entry data. Finally, we draw some broad conclusions about the findings in the context of current policies and make some suggestions for further data analysis.

About the entries

The Awards attracted a large and diverse range of entries:

- Nominations were received from 2140 residents organised into 540 groups at 260 housing schemes
 - 203 of the entries were submitted from retirement housing schemes, while 57 came from Housing with Care schemes
 - 214 of the nominated schemes provided rented accommodation and 46 were leasehold/shared equity
- The 260 housing schemes were managed by 128 providers, 9 of them from the private sector and 119 from the public and voluntary sectors
 - Entries were well spread across the Awards' size categories, as shown in *Table 1*. The size refers to the number of properties in each housing scheme
 - Entries from more than one group of residents were received from 159 of the 260 schemes and the largest number of entries from a single scheme was 13
 - Nominations spanned a range of population densities, coming from schemes in cities, towns and rural areas

The majority of the nominated schemes (232) were in England, with 12 in Scotland, 8 in Wales, and 8 in Northern Ireland. The English schemes were distributed across 44 counties. The highest number came from Greater London (20), followed by Tyne and Wear (15) and Greater Manchester (14). Kent, Staffordshire and West Midlands each had 11 schemes entered. In Northern Ireland, 3 schemes were entered from Antrim and 2 from Belfast, while Scotland had 2 entries from schemes in Edinburgh. Schemes entered from Wales were all from different counties.

Table 1. *The number of schemes entered in each size (ie number of properties per scheme) category*

	Under 30	30-44	45-59	60 +	60-99	100 +	Total
Retirement Housing	72	91	24	16			203
Housing with Care	11	23	15		6	2	57
Total	83	114	39	16	6	2	260

Selecting the award winners

The following process was used to identify the award winners:

- Residents were asked to indicate their level of agreement with a range of statements about their retirement housing both as a group and as individuals³. Group and individual scores were

combined to produce a total score for each scheme; where schemes had received more than one nomination, the total scores were added together and divided by the number of nominations

- The design scores were calculated by adding the scores from the game cards in the 'Where we live' (yellow) and 'My home' (red) topic areas

³ See page 30 for a full description of the Awards game

Selecting the award winners *continued*

- Scores were ranked in order to identify the gold, silver and bronze awards in each category
- Where scores were equal the number of entries from the scheme in relation to the number of residents was used as a tie-breaker (that is, if more residents had taken part from one scheme than another, this factor was the 'decider').

Emerging themes from an analysis of entries

Maximum scores for each individual topic were 28.0; for design the maximum was 65.0; and for the overall score the maximum was 112.0.

The range of scores achieved (see Table 2) suggests that residents have used the Awards as a real opportunity to say what they think about various aspects of their housing schemes, highlighting what works and what could be improved. For example, scores for 'My home' ranged from 8.7 to 28.0 and those for design from 23.1 to 51.7.

At the same time, the average scores for each topic suggest fairly high levels of satisfaction with the accommodation and services that retirement housing schemes provide.

Table 2. Profile of the scheme scores

Category	Lowest Score	Highest Score	Average Score
Where we live	15.5	28.0	25.0
My home	8.7	28.0	20.7
Services	9.2	28.0	24.6
Lifestyle	10.0	28.0	23.4
Overall score	57.0	108.7	93.7
Design score	23.1	51.7	42.4

Further analysis was carried out in order to discover whether any particular scheme characteristics were related to high levels of satisfaction. Four scheme characteristics were found to be significantly correlated to high scores:

1. Scheme Size: There was a significant correlation between the number of properties in a scheme and scores for both 'Where we live' and

'My home'. This means that larger schemes were more likely to score highly for these two topics.

2. Number of storeys: A smaller number of storeys in a scheme had a significant correlation with all four topic scores ('Where we live', 'My home', 'Services' and 'Lifestyle') and with the overall design score. This means that having fewer storeys was a good predictor of a high score in all these categories.

3. Location: The nature of the area in which a scheme is located showed a significant correlation with high scores for 'Where we live', 'Services' and 'Lifestyle'. This means that schemes sited in urban areas were far more likely to score highly for these three topics than those in rural areas.

4. Year of build or refurbishment: The more recently a scheme was built or refurbished the more likely it was to score highly for 'My home', 'Services' and 'Design'.

A range of additional scheme characteristics were analysed but found not to significantly correlate with scores. However, the distribution of these characteristics is listed here for interest and because it may also indicate fruitful areas for further data analysis:

- 34% of schemes organised outings for residents
- In terms of on-site scheme facilities, 6% had a restaurant, 22% a dining room, 6% a shop and 86% a communal garden
- 65% of schemes provided regular social activities
- Provider ratings for scheme accessibility were 49% Easy, 18% Manageable and 0.5% Difficult
- There were Residents Associations at 27% of the schemes.

Our analysis also explored residents' responses to specific statements that were relevant to ongoing policy debates. For example, a recent report entitled '*Nobody's Listening*' (Help the Aged 2009) emphasised the need to provide mechanisms for resident involvement and engagement. Our analysis showed that 53% of residents responded 'Yes' to the award statement 'We are consulted when it matters, and our views are taken into account' compared with 10% who said 'No'. The rest answered 'Most of the time' or 'Sometimes', which suggests that while there is still room for improvement in this area, the majority feel that they are consulted. It is interesting to note that a positive response to this

statement was likely to lead to a high score for the topics of 'Where we live' and 'Services'.

The importance to older people of maintaining links with local communities has been a key theme of the social inclusion agenda as outlined in a range of policies, notably *Lifetime Homes*, *Lifetime Neighbourhoods*: the Government strategy for housing in an ageing society (CLG 2008).

In the Awards nomination process, 76% responded 'Yes' to the statement 'For those who look for it, there is a good social life - a good community spirit' while only 5% said 'No'. This suggests that older people's housing schemes can provide that all-important sense of community for residents. A positive response to this statement was also correlated with a high score for the topics of 'Services' and 'Lifestyle'.

Role of scheme managers and wardens

Current debates about the best way to deliver support services for older people in supported housing have led to much consideration of the role of scheme managers and wardens. Our analysis shows that residents greatly value this role, with 77% responding 'Yes' to the statement 'I find the management very responsive and helpful' and only 2% voicing disagreement. A positive response to this statement was also likely to lead to high scores for 'Where we live', 'Services' and 'Lifestyle'.

However, our data does not allow us to draw any firm conclusions about the issue of resident wardens because the analysis does not demonstrate any correlation between the presence of a resident warden and the Awards scores. Interestingly, nominated schemes without a resident manager do not score any lower than those which do have one. However, it is worth noting that a large majority of the entries were from schemes with a dedicated scheme manager, and we can speculate that they might well have played an important role in promoting the Awards and helping residents to organise the nominations.

Conclusion

This section has shown that the Awards attracted a substantial number of nominations from housing schemes with a diverse range of characteristics in terms of geographical area, types of housing and size of schemes. This demonstrates the value of the Awards in promoting resident involvement by providing a means of rating their experiences of various aspects of living in retirement housing.

There are of course other mechanisms for doing this, but feedback from residents indicates that the Awards complement and add to these by providing a process that is enjoyable and accessible as well as informative and empowering. Crucially, the Awards are also able to demonstrate to residents that their views are valued. Feedback from participants shows that the nomination process triggered lively and interesting discussions among residents about their schemes and how they felt about living there.

These Awards are extremely relevant to the ongoing debate about how sheltered housing services are delivered, as discussed in the recently published *More than just a few kind words – Reshaping support in sheltered housing; a good practice guide for housing providers and local authorities* (National Housing Federation). Analysis of the entry data indicates a wide range of scores in each topic area, suggesting that there are real differences in how residents experience the schemes they live in. In addition, certain scheme characteristics appear to be associated with positive resident experiences, with four emerging as particularly important: scheme size, scheme location, the number of storeys in a scheme, and how recently it was built or refurbished.

Development of the awards

Further analysis of the Awards data could provide the opportunity to investigate these issues in more detail. For example, there is potential to explore the role of scheme location, the value of a range of on-site facilities, and whether and how the age of a scheme affects the quality of life of its residents. Consideration of this analysis may also inform the development of the Awards in terms of possible changes to the nomination process and extra statements that might usefully next be included. This first year of the Awards has been very successful and has achieved the aim of encouraging residents to discuss their experiences of living in retirement housing. We hope that this report will inform discussions about what makes a good quality of life for the residents of retirement housing. It will also help us to understand what information needs to be available to older people and their relatives who are faced with decisions about where to live. One of our aims is to encourage more people in more schemes to participate in these Awards in 2011 so that more residents have the opportunity to express their views and help us provide an even better picture of what it is like to live in retirement housing.

The Awards 2010

The 260 nominated schemes are managed by 128 housing providers from over 1000 UK providers of more than one housing scheme.

We hope and expect that this year's success will convince a much larger number of providers to help their residents, in future years, to express their views through these Awards and contribute to our understanding of what works⁴.

Entries were submitted into separate groups - retirement housing and housing-with-care - and further divided into categories based on the number of properties per scheme: a simple way of comparing like with like. The selection of the finalists was aided by computer based statistical analysis, using well-being criteria agreed by the three judges, the authors of this report. All scores were brought into the mix to assess the ultimate criteria: well-being. The judges intervened only to make sure, arbitrarily, that no particular scheme would win in more than one category.

Highlighting what works

The 32 winning schemes, large and small, old and new, provide for a wide range of needs and expectations (physical, practical, emotional, environmental, cultural, etc) in order to support the overall well-being of their residents. They are the best of the 260 schemes from which we received entries. Although 260 is a large number by most survey standards, it only represents about 1 per cent of the 25,000 housing schemes for older people available in the UK, with or without support

or services. In order to share a wide selection of successful schemes we opted for 3 winners in most categories. However, the scoring gaps between the bronze, silver and gold awards are generally very small and we can therefore claim to have 32 worthy winners. Whilst we are aware that there are numerous schemes throughout the UK which are certainly as good as those that have emerged from this consultation, we are pleased to be able to highlight clear examples of what works - such as our design category winners. Taken together they demonstrate that retirement housing, in all its forms, is well worth supporting, developing and celebrating.

While we would not claim that the winning schemes are necessarily the absolute best in the land, we do know that they are excellent because their residents tell us so; this backs our conviction that specialist housing for older people does indeed provide precisely what many people need and hope for in later life.

The Housing LIN Award goes to the extra care housing scheme which received the highest level of praise from its residents, extra care being one distinct model of housing-with-care. The Housing Learning and Improvement Network (LIN) is the national network for promoting new ideas and supporting change in the delivery of housing, care and support services for older and vulnerable adults, including people with disabilities and long term conditions. The Housing LIN is part of the *Department of Health Care Networks*.

⁴ Our message to some providers (Hanover Housing Association in particular) was confusing and led to the misunderstanding that asking the scheme manager not to attend the 'game' meant refraining from encouraging and helping the residents to participate. We apologise for this.

**GOLD
AWARD**

SCHOOL COURT

Hednesford, Staffordshire

Managed by: *The ExtraCare Charitable Trust*

The best UK Extra Care Housing scheme, sponsored by the HOUSING LEARNING & IMPROVEMENT NETWORK of the Department of Health Care Networks

Housing Learning and Improvement
Network



Provider's statement: *The ExtraCare Charitable Trust is a pioneer of both Village and extra care housing communities which enable people to enjoy active and independent lifestyles in their later years. Our approach is founded on the charitable principle that age, health or financial means shouldn't be a barrier to achieving an enjoyable quality of life in later years. We view an active lifestyle, which promotes independence and well-being as the key to achieving this.*

**GOLD
AWARD**

IVY COURT

St. Helens, Merseyside

Managed by: **ECHG**

The best UK Retirement Housing scheme, category under 30 units, sponsored by DHU RURAL

Dhu Rural



Provider's statement: *Ivy Court gives every resident an environment that is safe, secure, warm and friendly whilst empowering them to maintain their independence for longer in the home of their choice.*

Statement proposed by the residents themselves

SILVER AWARD

DAVID GRESHAM HOUSE

Oxted, Surrey

Managed by: *Abbeyfield North Downs Society Ltd*

The best UK Retirement
Housing scheme,
category under 30 units,
sponsored by
DHU RURAL

Dhu Rural



Provider's statement: *Abbeyfield at David Gresham House provides residents with a secure, relaxed, homely environment in which care, security, comfort and companionship are provided without loss of individual freedom. It offers a "family feel" and allows residents to live as full a life as health will allow, respected by those who support them, and with dignity and privacy preserved. Both sheltered housing and residential care for frailer elderly persons are offered.*

BRONZE AWARD

COLVILLE COURT

Teddington, Middlesex

Managed by: *Central and Cecil*

The best UK Retirement
Housing scheme,
category under 30 units,
sponsored by
DHU RURAL

Dhu Rural



Provider's statement: *Central & Cecil is dedicated to providing quality homes, care and support that contribute to the health and vitality of communities. Our spacious studio apartments and one bedroom flats provide active older people with support, security and independence. Our core values of security, innovation and compassion lie at the heart of our services.*

GOLD AWARD

MARKERS

Uffculme, Devon

Managed by: *Westcountry Housing Association Ltd*

The best UK Retirement
Housing scheme,
category 30-44 units,
sponsored by
MAINSTAY
RESIDENTIAL LIMITED



Provider's statement: *Markers nestles in the rural village of Uffculme, Mid Devon. Built in stages since 1978, there are 44 properties including flats, houses and bungalows. The scheme has various facilities including a communal lounge, guest room, allotments for the more active, extensive grounds and a lively Residents' Association. Both Support Advisors actively work with residents to enable good quality independent living.*

SILVER AWARD

WILLOWDENE COURT

Croxteth, Liverpool

Managed by: *ECHG*

The best UK Retirement
Housing scheme,
category 30-44 units,
sponsored by
MAINSTAY
RESIDENTIAL LIMITED



Provider's statement: *Willowdene Court is a warm and friendly scheme, where we feel safe and secure; support is here when needed to help maintain our independence.*
Statement proposed by the residents themselves

BRONZE AWARD

CHALLEN COURT

Horsham, West Sussex

Managed by: *Saxon Weald*



The best UK Retirement
Housing scheme,
category 30-44 units,
sponsored by
MAINSTAY
RESIDENTIAL LIMITED



Provider's statement: *Challen Court provides 35 self-contained flats for people aged 60 and over, providing housing and support to promote independent living. Residents choose the level of support they want. Challen Court has a dedicated Scheme Manager who co-ordinates the help and support on offer, helping residents to maintain their independence and keep well.*

GOLD AWARD

CHESTERTON COURT,

St Neots, Cambridgeshire

Managed by: *Accent Nene*



The best UK Retirement
Housing scheme,
category 45-59 units,
sponsored by
LEGAL & GENERAL



Provider's statement: *Our mission is to provide accessible good quality supported housing, promoting choice and independence that enables vulnerable people to continue to live in their own homes. Our vision is for our services to be at the heart of the community and to be seen to set leading standards for supported housing services that strive for continuous improvement*

SILVER AWARD

GREAT MEAD

Southend-on-Sea, Essex

Managed by: *South Essex Homes*

The best UK Retirement
Housing scheme,
category 45-59 units,
sponsored by
LEGAL & GENERAL



Provider's statement: *We empower our residents to live independently for as long as they choose in their own homes. Sheltered Housing staff provide guidance and support to assist with maintaining independent living by contacting or signposting residents to relevant agencies i.e. advocacy services, social services, occupational therapy, aids and adaptations and care agencies. Sheltered Housing offers independence, security and peace of mind for its residents and their family.*

BRONZE AWARD

DRYLEAZE HOUSE

Wotton-under-Edge, Gloucestershire

Managed by: *Stroud District Council*

The best UK Retirement
Housing scheme,
category 45-59 units,
sponsored by
LEGAL & GENERAL



Statement of purpose: *We are committed to the provision of affordable, safe and comfortable accommodation for older people. The service aims to encourage an independent lifestyle and to foster an environment that is friendly and supportive.*

GOLD AWARD

NICHOLSON HOUSE

Southend-on-Sea, Essex

Managed by: *South Essex Homes*



The best UK Retirement Housing scheme, category 60 units and over, sponsored by GENTOO LIVING



Provider's statement: We empower our residents to live independently for as long as they choose in their own homes. Sheltered Housing staff provide guidance and support to assist with maintaining independent living by contacting or signposting residents to relevant agencies i.e. advocacy services, social services, occupational therapy, aids and adaptations and care agencies. Sheltered Housing offers independence, security and peace of mind for its residents and their family

SILVER AWARD

CAUSEWAY FARM

Horndean, Waterlooville, Hampshire

Managed by: *Drum Housing Association*



The best UK Retirement Housing scheme, category 60 units and over, sponsored by GENTOO LIVING



Provider's statement: Causeway Farm offers self contained accommodation for those who value their independence but require the security of support when needed. Sheltered Housing is a key contributor to good health and assists in enabling residents to live independent and fulfilled lives. We support residents in maintaining links with the local community through luncheon clubs, keep fit classes, bingo, art classes, indoor bowls, to name but a few.

BRONZE AWARD

QUEEN ALEXANDRA COTTAGE HOMES

Eastbourne, East Sussex

Managed by: *Queen Alexandra Cottage Homes*



The best UK Retirement Housing scheme, category 60 units and over, sponsored by GENTOO LIVING



Provider's statement: *Queen Alexandra Cottage Homes is a registered Charity established in 1906. The almshouses were built, free of debt, by the people of Eastbourne for the 'aged and deserving poor of the town'. Over the years generous benefactors have enabled the trust to build on to this development with the Homes now being able to accommodate 107 residents in both sheltered housing and nursing care.*

GOLD AWARD

HOMEGATE HOUSE

Eastbourne, East Sussex

Managed by: *Peverel Retirement*



The most valued UK scheme in the Retirement Housing Design category, sponsored by NATIONWIDE BUILDING SOCIETY



Provider's statement: *With over 27 years' experience in managing retirement developments, Peverel Retirement understands the issues that matter to residents and is committed to putting its residents first. As with all our retirement developments, at Homegate House we aim to deliver a professional, caring, value for money service for our residents with a house manager on site to help them lead independent, worry-free lives.*

SILVER AWARD

LISBON PLACE

Westlands, Newcastle, Staffordshire

Managed by: *Housing 21*

The most valued UK scheme in the Retirement Housing Design category, sponsored by NATIONWIDE BUILDING SOCIETY



Provider's statement: *Housing 21's aim is to improve older people's lives by promoting independence and choice. Our leasehold schemes allow residents to continue to own their properties while receiving the support necessary to maintain an independent lifestyle. Lisbon Place provides comfortable, self-contained housing within a close community and an opportunity to participate in a regular activities programme, according to personal choice.*

BRONZE AWARD

MacEWEN COURT

Crown, Inverness, Invernesshire

Managed by: *Cairn Housing Association*

The most valued UK scheme in the Retirement Housing Design category, sponsored by NATIONWIDE BUILDING SOCIETY



Statement of purpose: *Our Sheltered Housing Service seeks to:*

- *Enable tenants to successfully manage and maintain their tenancies & independence*
- *Work with tenants to develop appropriate support plans*
- *Provide practical support and maximise choices*
- *Work in partnership with other professional and support agencies to meet the diverse needs of individuals and help in their realisation of their personal aspirations*

GOLD AWARD

BARTON MEWS

Barton under Needwood, Staffordshire

Managed by: *Shaw Healthcare*

The best UK
Housing-with-care scheme,
category under 30 units,
sponsored by
RETIREMENT
VILLAGES LTD



Provider's statement: *Barton Mews extra care provides a real alternative to residential care through providing home owners with security of tenure, independence plus personalised care and support packages tailored to individual requirements. New lifestyle choices are available for those active in retirement, with the peace of mind that should circumstances change - care support, GP and inpatient reablement services are all there onsite*

SILVER AWARD

GREENHILL WAY

Shirley, Solihull, West Midlands

Managed by: *Solihull Community Housing*

The best UK
Housing-with-care scheme,
category under 30 units,
sponsored by
RETIREMENT
VILLAGES LTD



Provider's statement: *We provide practical and emergency support of excellent quality to older people within the resources available, in order to enable them to remain in their own homes with dignity, comfort and self respect. Our core principle is to provide high quality individually tailored services which meet the care and support needs of vulnerable adults. Our service promotes independence, choice, and control for all tenants receiving our individually tailored provision.*

BRONZE AWARD

BELONG MACCLESFIELD

Macclesfield, Cheshire

Managed by: *Belong*



The best UK
Housing-with-care scheme,
category under 30 units,
sponsored by
RETIREMENT
VILLAGES LTD



Provider's statement: *Belong heralds a wonderful new quality of life for older people who want the comfort and convenience of living 'at home' along with any extra support that may be needed. Belong provides a secure, vibrant and happy community for all who visit or live within the village that has been created in partnership with older people.*

GOLD AWARD

JUBILEE COURT

March, Cambridgeshire

Managed by: *Sanctuary Hereward*



The best UK
Housing-with-care scheme,
category 30-44 units,
sponsored by
McCARTHY & STONE
RETIREMENT LIFESTYLES



Provider's statement: *We are committed to helping our residents to live as independently as possible, with a team of dedicated care and support staff on hand round-the-clock. Our residents have their own flats within a thriving community scheme with fantastic facilities. Our residents are at the heart of everything we do and their opinions help us to shape our services and provide them with the highest standards of care and support.*

SILVER AWARD

STEEPLE VIEW

Stowupland, Suffolk

Managed by: *Orwell Housing Association Ltd*

The best UK
Housing-with-care scheme,
category 30-44 units,
sponsored by
McCARTHY & STONE
RETIREMENT LIFESTYLES



Provider's statement: *Orwell Housing Association is a local organisation; it has provided a range of housing and care services for 40 years within the eastern region. Orwell has a strong commitment to providing a range of quality supported housing options for people with varying needs and continues to develop in partnership with a variety of agencies to provide innovative solutions to those in need.*

BRONZE AWARD

GLENOWEN COURT

Belfast, Northern Ireland

Managed by: *Fold Housing Association Ltd*

The best UK
Housing-with-care scheme,
category 30-44 units,
sponsored by
McCARTHY & STONE
RETIREMENT LIFESTYLES



Provider's statement: *We aim to:*

- *Create a warm, supportive and homely atmosphere for each resident*
- *Recognise and respond to residents needs on an individual basis*
- *Promote independence and a positive attitude*
- *Encourage group and social activities and a sense of community*
- *Encourage relatives to play an active part in caring for and supporting residents*

**GOLD
AWARD**

TANNERY COURT (Cwrt Barcdy)

Abergele, North Wales

Managed by: *Retirement Security Ltd*



The best UK
Housing-with-care scheme,
category 45-59 units,
sponsored by
KEEPMOAT



Provider's statement: *Our principal aims are to enable older people, who may have difficulty remaining at home, to retain their independence, improve their quality of life and preserve their capital. This is achieved by careful attention to property design, very high standards of service, and a unique management model that provides owners with a real voice in the decision-making at their Court.*

**SILVER
AWARD**

WHITE OAK COURT

Swanley, Kent

Managed by: *West Kent Housing Association Ltd*



The best UK
Housing-with-care scheme,
category 45-59 units,
sponsored by
KEEPMOAT



Provider's statement: *Situated in the heart of the Swanley community, White Oak Court offers care and support to residents in a friendly, safe, secure and vibrant environment. The aim of the service is to provide accommodation and services for people 55 years and over who need support and care to maintain independent living, and to reach out to local older people and the wider community through the provision of innovative projects.*

BRONZE AWARD

ROWANBERRIES

Clayton, Bradford, West Yorkshire

Managed by: **MHA**

The best UK
Housing-with-care scheme,
category 45-59 units,
sponsored by
KEEPMOAT



Provider's statement: *Our aim is to provide a homely environment that gives peace of mind, security, support and stimulation. We consider every resident as an individual and provide a caring environment based on promoting and maintaining independence, choice and control. Our staff work to ensure that every individual is treated with respect and we tailor our services to ensure peoples' personal beliefs, lifestyle preferences and cultural needs are upheld.*

GOLD AWARD

MILL RISE

Cross Heath, Newcastle-under-Lyme, Staffordshire

Managed by: **Aspire Housing Ltd**

The best UK
Housing-with-care scheme,
category 60-99 units,
sponsored by
WATES LIVING SPACE



Provider's statement: *Mill Rise offers freedom to live independently, with the reassurance of knowing you have instant access to a support network too. You'll enjoy the companionship of other older people with as much or as little social activity as you want. The scheme has been designed to guarantee flexible living accommodation for people of all abilities.*

SILVER AWARD

WILLOWMERE

East Road, Middlewich, Cheshire

Managed by: *Avantage*



The best UK
Housing-with-care scheme,
category 60-99 units,
sponsored by
WATES LIVING SPACE



Provider's statement: *Avantage provides:*

- *Choice for those who want to live in their own home and keep their independence.*
- *A range of property types and tenures*
- *A safe and secure environment where preventative health and active ageing can promote independence.*
- *Flexible, person-centred support and care to meet a range of dependency needs*
- *Community activities for older people in the local community*
- *A modern alternative to long term residential care*

BRONZE AWARD

BUCKSHAW RETIREMENT VILLAGE

The Grange, Euxton, Chorley, Lancashire

Managed by: *Oakbridge Retirement Villages*



The best UK
Housing-with-care scheme,
category 60-99 units,
sponsored by
WATES LIVING SPACE



Provider's statement: *We will champion a 21st century lifestyle befitting our retired community and promote a unique alternative to traditional care and accommodation options, extending choices beyond preconceived notions of retirement. We will respect your privacy, dignity and freedom of choice and we will encourage your independence. Above all we will value your individuality and work together towards a better quality of life.*

**GOLD
AWARD**

BRUNSWICK GARDENS VILLAGE

Woodhouse, Sheffield

Managed by: *The ExtraCare Charitable Trust*



The best UK
Housing-with-care scheme,
category 100 units and over,
sponsored by
THE OUTSIDE CLINIC



Provider's statement: *The ExtraCare Charitable Trust is a pioneer of both Village and extra care housing communities which enable people to enjoy active and independent lifestyles in their later years. Our approach is founded on the charitable principle that age, health or financial means shouldn't be a barrier to achieving an enjoyable quality of life in later years. We view an active lifestyle, which promotes independence and well-being as the key to achieving this.*

**GOLD
AWARD**

CAMPERDOWN COURT

Dundee, Scotland

Managed by: *Bield Housing Association Ltd*



The most valued
UK scheme in the
Housing-with-care
Design category,
sponsored by
NATIONWIDE
BUILDING SOCIETY



Provider's statement: *Bield's primary objective is to enable older people to live independent and fulfilling lives by being a leading and innovative provider of high quality appropriate housing, care and support services. Camperdown Court, a Very Sheltered Housing Development located in Dundee, is one of more than 150 housing developments owned or managed by Bield that enable older people to live independently.*

SILVER AWARD

BROADWAY GARDENS

Bushbury, Wolverhampton

Managed by: *The ExtraCare Charitable Trust*

The most valued UK scheme in the Housing-with-care Design category, sponsored by NATIONWIDE BUILDING SOCIETY



Provider's statement: *The ExtraCare Charitable Trust is a pioneer of both Village and extra care housing communities which enable people to enjoy active and independent lifestyles in their later years. Our approach is founded on the charitable principle that age, health or financial means shouldn't be a barrier to achieving an enjoyable quality of life in later years. We view an active lifestyle, which promotes independence and well-being as the key to achieving this.*

BRONZE AWARD

THE MEADOWS

Shirecliffe, Sheffield, South Yorkshire

Managed by: *South Yorkshire Housing Association Ltd*

The most valued UK scheme in the Housing-with-care Design category, sponsored by NATIONWIDE BUILDING SOCIETY



Provider's statement: *The Meadows aims to extend the choice of housing available to older people by providing comfortable, self contained accommodation within a safe and supportive environment. The Meadows promotes a sense of community, it provides opportunities for people to participate in regular activities and events according to choice and enables people to maintain control over their lives, promoting independence through flexible and person centred care and support provision.*

About the Awards

Developing the concept

Aims

From the very beginning the idea of setting up the Awards was rooted in current strategy that recognises the value and importance of retirement housing, but also acknowledges that we need to know more about what works and why. Crucially we are interested in what works from the perspective of those who live in specialist housing, and how these lessons can be used to develop schemes and services in the future. Our particular focus when we developed the Awards concept was on 'extra care' sheltered housing, a new model offering support and care to residents (matching what a traditional residential care home could provide, when necessary), but also reaching out to older people living nearby.

Broadening the scope of the Awards

But change always brings difficulties, and in the last 2 - 3 years there has been much public debate about how changes have been made to some more traditional retirement housing schemes. Many people feel that residents have not been fully consulted about their preferences and concerns. So we took the decision to broaden the scope of the Awards to include all forms of retirement housing, traditional as well as new. The overall original intention remained as before - to allow residents to nominate their schemes, highlighting what they felt was good practice and what they particularly valued, rather than take an academic or professional view. This might be seen as a risky strategy in as much as residents' views might seriously contradict perceived wisdom about what make a good scheme, but favouring residents' views was always the priority.

Developing the consultation

In developing the nomination process for the Awards the first question for the team to address was the format of the process. Beyond ensuring that the nominations were resident led, it was also the intention to make the process interesting and engaging and - as much as possible - enjoyable; an opportunity for groups of people to sit down and discuss what they liked (and disliked) about their schemes and their homes in ways that they might not otherwise do. A 'game' format was eventually

decided upon rather than a more formal mechanism such as a survey or questionnaire.

The second question concerned what type of game would allow a set of information about different schemes to be collated, meaningful comparisons made, and winning schemes identified. A key challenge was that of balancing simplicity with detail. The game had to be enjoyable and accessible but also allow the meaningful exploration of a range of elements of life in retirement housing schemes. After much discussion it was decided that a card game was best suited to the purpose. Most people are familiar with card games of one type or another and they allow different numbers of people to play. Each card could carry a particular statement to be discussed by residents, and a score agreed. The card game format also allowed for the inclusion of statements to be considered by individual participants rather than only in groups.



Deciding on the topics

Two final questions remained: what topics should be covered, and how best might residents' experiences of these topics be measured? In devising the topics, the team reflected on their own and others' research findings and research tools. What did research experience tell us about aspects of life in specialist housing that could or should be covered in the game? What appeared to generate most concern or most comment from residents? It was clear that people's own private space was important – their sense of home, how their homes were designed, the space, levels of comfort and privacy. Similarly, services such as support and care, maintenance, meals, were crucial to people's satisfaction. Schemes' location and neighbourhood have also emerged as important factors in shaping people's views, along with the availability and quality of shared facilities within schemes – communal rooms,

About the Awards

gardens, and so forth. Finally, people's sense of belonging, of being part of a community also needed to be tested as there are sometimes contradictory messages around privacy and community: about wanting to participate in social activities, but not feeling that such participation is forced in any way, and also about the social marginalisation of the those who are disabled or very frail (see for example Bernard et al. 2007; Croucher et al. 2006; Croucher et al. 2007; Callaghan et al. 2009; Evans 2009; Evans and Means 2007).

Following discussions, four broad topics were agreed:

- Lifestyle
- Services
- Where we live
- My home

Developing the statements

The Awards team then developed 10 statements for each of these four broad topics, which addressed more specific elements of retirement housing schemes. For example, statements about "my home" reflected issues about privacy, design and accessibility, comfort, and space. Statements about "where we live" covered issues about the shared spaces within the scheme - access, design, facilities - as well as issues about the wider neighbourhood where the scheme was located. Statements in the lifestyle topic addressed social activities and events, and people's sense of being part of a community. Finally, statements about services explored not just care and support, but maintenance and repair, catering, and management.

It is important to note that there was much discussion about the inclusion of questions relating to service charges and costs, and of course, people do have strong views about what they are paying for and whether it is value for money. Reflecting on research experience which has demonstrated that often there is considerable resentment



within schemes between some residents who are paying for their services and others who are supported by benefits, it seemed that asking questions about charges and costs would not be appropriate in the context of a game that involved group discussion.

With regard to scoring, the game needed to provide a way of measuring levels of satisfaction with different elements of the scheme, but also be simple to use. It was therefore decided to use a simple Likert Scale, where residents were asked to indicate their level of agreement (from strongly disagree to strongly agree) with each statement on a scale of 1 to 5. This score needed to be a consensus, reached following discussion with the group of people playing the game.

Drafting the instructions

Once the type of game, key topics, and scoring methods were decided, instructions for residents were drafted. The intention was that the game would be played by groups of residents without assistance or prompting from staff. As well as written instructions, the set of cards, and score sheets, a DVD would be provided with an introduction to the game, and how to play it. One member of the group would act as score keeper, recording the group scores for each of the statements. Players could also fill in an individual score sheet. The

idea was that the cards would be shuffled, and each player would take it in turn to read the statement revealed, and start the discussion. Apart from the cards with the statements to be scored there were a number of "wild" cards with humorous or well-known quotations about getting older, and so forth. These wild cards were intended to add more interest and enjoyment.



About the Awards

Testing the game

Ten trial packs of cards were designed. Each card had the EAC logo on the back and then one of 40 statements on the front. They were colour coded and with a separate motif for each of the four topics. In the spring of 2009 the prototype of the game was tested in four very varied housing-with-care schemes, with very different groups of players.



The game was introduced by a researcher and then the groups of volunteers were asked to play the game without any further interference, with the researcher simply observing how well the game worked. At the end of game there was time for discussion and for players to give their views on the relevance of the statements, missing themes or topics, clarity of instructions, scoring and, crucially what they thought of the idea of a game and the Awards themselves.

Reactions to the game

In the trials the game generated a rich and fascinating discussion about life in the different schemes. As a means of promoting discussion and getting participants to think about what they liked and disliked, and to discuss various different opinions and views, and as a means of understanding more about how it feels to live in a housing-with-care-scheme, the game was a great success. However, there were a number of refinements that needed to be made. Most participants said they had enjoyed playing

the game. They thought it was much more interesting than being asked to fill out a survey form or questionnaire, and it was clear that many people had enjoyed the discussions and being asked for their opinions. However most participants felt that there should be ways of making the game simpler. People welcomed the explanation from the facilitator and felt that a similar explanation on a DVD would not be that helpful mainly because most

schemes did not have a DVD player in the communal area. Some of the statements referred to facilities or services that were not available in the schemes, so people were unable to score these statements. With other questions it was difficult to reach agreement. For example, some residents might have flats with a much better view, or quieter location than others. For people who were relatively well the game was not difficult. But for those who were frail or had sensory impairments, speech difficulties, or difficulties in holding or shuffling cards, it was not always easy to play. The wild cards were not well received. Participants thought they slowed the game down, and were

confusing. Finally some participants felt that if others had played the game they might have arrived at different scores.

Drafting the instructions

Reflecting on the comments of participants and the observations of the facilitators, the game was refined. The card game format, with the four topics, was retained in the new version. However the number of statements was reduced and some were rephrased or simplified. The re-designed cards were made slightly larger than a standard pack of cards, and the statements written in a larger font. Perhaps the biggest challenge was to find some way of addressing those aspects within schemes where individual experiences and preferences could be very different and where a consensus score would be difficult to achieve. For example, as noted above, in most schemes some people's homes might be larger, get better light, or have a nicer view than others. Similarly some individuals

About the Awards

might simply be more sociable and prefer social events and activities. Others might want to be more private. In refining the game, further consideration was given to differentiate those statements that required a group “consensus” score, and others that required an individual score. When playing the final version of the game, participants were therefore given two different score sheets – one group score sheet and one score sheet for each participant to give their own personal rating to statements that reflect more personal preferences and experiences. It is clearly indicated on each card whether the statement is to be discussed and scored by the group, or given a separate score by each individual player. Furthermore, two sets of cards were designed – one to be used in sheltered housing where there are likely to be fewer services and facilities, and the other in extra care housing where these services and facilities are key features of the scheme. The scoring was also simplified, with four possible scoring options for each statement rather than the original five. Finally, reflecting on the trial participants’ comments that different groups of players might reach different conclusions, it was decided that there should be no limit to the number of group entries that could be made from each scheme.

Once the refinements were agreed, the next task was to advertise and promote the game and to encourage as many residents in as many scheme as possible to take part.

The game

Cards and score sheets were designed to suggest a game rather than a questionnaire or survey. The game-like nature of the Awards aimed to encourage people to be talkative and interested in listening to and discussing other points of view.

The game instructions stipulated that scheme staff should not be present during the game, but that volunteers or relatives could help conduct the proceedings. The housing-with-care pack contained an additional single sheet of advice to the manager, suggesting how to help less able groups or residents to participate.

There were two decks of 28 cards, one for retirement housing, and the other for housing-with-care. Twenty two of the cards in both decks were the

same, while the other 6 cards addressed services particular to each model of housing. The cards were divided into 4 themed ‘colours’ (Where we live, My home, Services and Lifestyle).

In each deck 16 cards were to be discussed by a group of between 3 to 8 residents who had to agree a score for the statement on each card and enter it on a ‘group’ score sheet. The statements on the other 12 cards were not for discussion but rather a score was to be entered by each member of the group on their ‘individual’ score sheet. With a few exceptions there was a choice of 4 tick boxes (Yes – Mostly – Partly – No) for each card statement, such as “Our building is well designed and easy to get around”.

The completed single ‘group’ score sheet and the ‘individual’ score sheet (folded to hide their content) were to be placed into a Freepost self-addressed envelope. The games could be played by several groups in one scheme using multiple score sheets.

THE RULES

- 1 3 to 8 residents play at a table (ideally 4).
- 2 Each player picks up one *Individual Scoring Sheet*
- 3 One player undertakes to also complete the *Group Scoring Sheet* on behalf of the group.
- 4 **Important:** shuffle the cards.
- 5 One player picks up a card from the top of the pack, reads aloud the statement on the card, and passes it around if necessary.
- 6 If the card is a **Discuss card**, the player opens a short discussion (1 to 2 minutes) to get agreement on which response to tick on the *Group Score Sheet*.
- 7 If the card is a **Don't discuss** card, all the players tick their own response on their *Individual Score Sheet*, without discussion.
- 8 The card is then discarded.
- 9 It is then the turn of the next player, moving clockwise, to pick up the next card, to read aloud the statement, and so on...
- 10 The consultation is over when all the cards have been played.
- 11 By agreement, the players can decide to restart the game, to continue it later, or to play it again.
- 12 On the *Group* and all *Individual Score Sheets*, write an invented name for your group. Add the name of your scheme (Court or building) and its address or postcode.
- 13 Put all the *Score Sheets* in the Freepost envelope, seal it, write your scheme address at the back of the envelope and post it.
- 14 Other groups can re-use the cards and the additional *Score Sheets*, but must use a different invented group name. Send them to *EAC Housing Awards, Elderly Accommodation Counsel, FREEPOST LON15755, LONDON SE1 7YZ*



About the Awards

Planning the consultation

Attracting entries

The 'game' format of the nomination was designed to tease the residents into participating despite not being in line to win anything for themselves. However a raffle of 20 cash prizes (£100 each) did add a little incentive.

The Awards winners would be the managers, companies and organisations responsible for the facilities and services; it should therefore be their responsibility to encourage and help their residents to vote for their schemes.

About the Awards

Posters and flyers/order forms were distributed in bulk to housing providers and scheme managers, asking them to advertise the awards and make arrangements to facilitate the game.

The Awards ceremony was to be funded partly by those attending: so this necessitated making it sufficiently attractive to the finalists and their residents for them to want to purchase the majority of seats and tables.

In parallel, a campaign was mounted to raise additional sponsorship for the Awards.

Funding and sponsorships

The Housing LIN of the DH Care Networks had supported the Awards project from its beginnings when nominations were to be restricted to housing-with-care schemes. It has continued to do so, offering space in its newsletters and referring to it at every opportunity. The Housing LIN also sponsored its own prize: the Housing LIN Award for the best UK Extra Care Housing scheme.

Funding from CLG - the Department for Communities and Local Government - raised the scale and ambitions of the project. Such support, however, was naturally accompanied by an expectation that a similar level of funding would be raised by EAC from the private sector.

The sponsorship campaign could not turn to the housing providers who would find themselves in the awkward position of presenting awards to their competitors while not getting one for themselves. EAC therefore targeted its efforts on the many businesses, services, companies and agencies active in the broad housing provider sector.

Various types of sponsorships were created, including 4 Core sponsorships of £7,500 each and 11 sponsorships of £1,000 for each of the Awards categories available. At the same time all components of the Awards and its ceremony were open to sponsorship.

When Nationwide Building Society became the main commercial sponsors, closely followed by Legal & General, EAC knew that this year's Awards would be a great success. Many other sponsors followed by taking up category sponsorships or exhibition space at the event, thus stabilising the financial foundations of these Awards. (see Credits)

Live run 2010

Numbers of entries

- 2392 nomination packs were sent at the request of residents and managers (1923 retirement housing packs and 469 housing-with-care packs)
- 536 nominations were received, (from 428 retirement housing schemes, 108 housing-with-care schemes, plus 4 untraceable spoilt score entries)
- In round figures the nominations were from:
 - 540 groups of tenants in 260 housing schemes managed by
 - 128 organisations/housing providers which were made up of:
 - 9 in the private sector, and
 - 119 in the public and voluntary sectors.

Further details and analysis of the entries are given on page 7.

Quality of entries

A handful of residents and managers judged the nomination's demands too taxing for residents. However, a larger number of email messages, letters and telephone calls attested to the popularity of the game of cards and the stimulating discussions it triggered (*see the Residents' statements on the back cover*).

A small proportion (under 5%) of the groups of residents who received nomination packs found the instructions unclear. Much of this confusion was due to having to deal with two types of score sheets: the groups score sheets and the individual score sheets. The relatively low number of spoilt entries seems to confirm that overall the formula worked very well indeed.



About the Awards

On the score sheets residents were invited to invent a group name. Whilst some of the names were familiar and predictable, others provided some fun for those involved in entering the data with the opportunity to interpret the mood or spirit of these groups at the time.

Managing the data

Nominations were sent in a Freepost envelope. The mailing out of nomination packs and the receipt of the completed returns were badly affected by the postal strikes that occurred in the autumn of 2009. Entries were therefore accepted until 10 days beyond the final postponed deadline of 15 November. Each entry consisted on average of one group score sheet and 4 individual score sheets. Each nomination was acknowledged by a standard letter. The scores were entered through a computer programme reproducing the design of the score sheets, making it extremely easy and quick to use. Details and comments that might be helpful to the judges were also recorded.

Some of the most recurring names for the groups were:

Golden Girls	Golden Oldies
Codgers	Old Codgers
Eggheads	Recycled Teenagers
Famous Five	Silver Surfers
Young Ones	Young at Heart

More intriguing were, in alphabetical order:

Beauty & The Beast	Birdbrain
Dead Loss	Desirables
Hells Angels	House of Horrors
Lap Dancers	Nobodys
Old Farts	Old But Not Out
The Has Beens	The Jezebels
The No Hoppers	Token Males



"Residents at 'Healeys', Porlock, Somerset, managed by Magna West Somerset Housing Association"

About the Awards

Credits

Main funders Communities and Local Government
Housing LIN – DH
Care Networks

Core sponsors Nationwide Building Society
Legal & General

Category sponsors, exhibitors and supporters



Photographs

Cover and pages 4,6,27,28,29,31 and 32
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The participants

We wish to thank the 2140 residents without whom these Awards would not exist. They have formed groups to play our 'game', and have provided us with a rich source of information about their housing and the services they enjoy. We would also like to thank those volunteers who helped us test the early version of the game. Their comments and reflexions were invaluable.

Many residents voted extremely enthusiastically for their scheme, giving it the highest scores in all domains. This may have reduced the range of scores, yet this enthusiasm in itself conveyed their very positive experience of living in their retirement housing schemes.

Several groups of residents and individuals seized the Awards as an opportunity to register their dissatisfaction with some aspects of their housing or of the services they receive. While this action ultimately disqualified their schemes from winning any awards, it provided us with extremely useful feedback which we will endeavour to share with the housing providers, whilst of course preserving the anonymity of the residents.

Our thanks go also to the scheme managers and housing providers for making it all possible by informing their residents about these Awards and by giving their time to facilitate the nomination process.

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This report describes an original method of collecting the views of a large number of residents on their well-being in all forms of retirement housing.

Residents' statements

“Tenants understood how to complete forms after instruction and then there was no input from staff during the process, all papers were sealed in envelopes by the individual groups ready for the post. Everyone commented how much they enjoyed it!”

Senior Scheme Manager, Hawthorn Mill House, Connect Housing Association

“Our tenants have taken part in the competition; we had 3 groups and they all enjoyed taking part”

Scheme Manager, St Columba Court, Anchor Retirement

“Just to let you know that we had a great afternoon yesterday with 3 groups of residents playing the cards. Each group led by another resident. We managed to engage with a number of residents who receive care services and do not always find it easy to get to social events. All agreed that it was an interesting and enjoyable way of discussing feelings on the place that we live in and the services we receive.”

Chair of Friends of Mill Rise, Mill Rise, Aspire Housing

“... the residents had combined it with a coffee morning and really enjoyed it, they had a good laugh.... the questions were just right and she & her manager thought it was an excellent idea to get the residents' feedback, so much so that they are keeping the pack of cards & intend to repeat the exercise every 12 months”

Notes on a telephone call from a Support Officer, Places for People Individual Support

“...We are a small sheltered accommodation run by Housing 21, we found the exercise very enjoyable and brought a lot of discussion to our meeting”

Letter from Lordship Court Tenants' Association

About Elderly Accommodation Counsel (EAC)

Elderly Accommodation Counsel (EAC) is a national charity, set up to help older people make informed decisions about meeting their housing and care needs. Its services include a national Advice Line and the website www.HousingCare.org, both of which offer a wealth of information and guidance, including access to the charity's uniquely detailed directory of all specialist accommodation for older people in the UK. EAC increasingly delivers its services through the FirstStop Advice network, in partnership with other national and local organisations.

Contact the Advice Line on: 020 7820 1343, Monday – Friday, 9am – 5pm
or visit: www.HousingCare.org, **or e-mail:** enquiries@eac.org.uk.

FirstStop Advice: 0800 377 70 70, Monday – Friday, 9am – 5pm
www.firststopadvice.org.uk **Email:** info@firststopadvice.org.uk