
**CONSULTATION PAPER ON
FUTURE HOUSING AND
CARE FOR OLDER PEOPLE**

launching



THE 20|20 PROJECT
a vision for older people's services

MARCH 2005

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Introduction to the 20/20 Project

In recent years the profile of a range of housing and care issues has risen massively. This is especially the case with older people's housing and care, where the links between good housing and health, independence, dignity and well-being cannot be emphasised enough.

It is acknowledged that good quality housing, care and support services are currently making a huge difference to many older people's lives. Currently the majority of older people live in their own homes, where they may be able to benefit from support, homecare and telecare services. For those that need to move because their accommodation is unsuitable, sheltered and extra care housing enable older people to maintain their independence through enhanced support, care and telecare.

We need to see how more older people can benefit from these services. This is especially important because of the rate of demographic change, with an anticipated increase in older people as a proportion of the overall population. But we also need to see how these services might be developed in the future - how they might adjust to meet new types of demand. It is also important considering the different needs, expectations and resources members of the next generation of older people are expected to have in comparison with previous generations.

To examine the future of older people's housing and care, a number of national older people's housing stakeholders have joined forces to launch the 20/20 Project. These include: Association of Social Alarms Providers, Centre for Sheltered Housing Studies, Emerging Role of Sheltered Housing (ERoSH) - the national consortium for sheltered and retirement housing, National Housing Federation, Association of Retirement Housing Managers, Chartered Institute of Housing, Counsel and Care, Elderly Accommodation Counsel and Federation of Black Housing Organisations.

The 20/20 Project aims to work through a vision for older people's housing and care by the year 2020, when the number of older people will start to peak as a proportion of the general population. It will do this through a number of activities throughout 2005, including conferences and seminars, research and receiving the views of a range of individuals and organisations involved in this area.

The 20/20 Project consultation

This document kick-starts the 20/20 Project by launching a consultation - or 'green paper' - where we ask for views on a number of key areas related to older people's housing and care. These are the areas that we feel need to be examined closely if housing and care services are to be responsive to the expectations of future generations of older people.

They are:

- What housing older people will want
- Extra care housing
- Design standards
- Support Services
- Diversity and equality issues
- The market place
- Telecare
- Sheltered housing workforce issues

We hope that all those involved in older people's housing and care will be able to give their views. In addition to older people themselves, we will be sending this paper to stakeholders in national and local government, campaigning organisations and providers of housing, care and support services.

The deadline for responses to this consultation is 31st July 2005 - see 'How to respond', in the last section of this paper. A full report will then be published, which we plan to take forward with ministers and their officials, local government and non-governmental stakeholders through a programme of activities later in this year and next year.

Responses are welcome on all or indeed only part(s) of this consultation, regardless of how long or short. If you have any thoughts on related areas not mentioned in this document these would also be welcome.

What housing older people will want

By 2020 there will be more older people requiring appropriate housing and housing based support services. As well as this, older people's expectations of housing and care will have changed radically.

We know that older people do currently value their independence and, like anyone, want control over their own lives - this runs to the very heart of the type of housing older people wish to live in, and the type of care they prefer to receive.

But what type of housing and care will older people want in 2020? How will the attitudes and aspirations of future generations of older people shape the types of housing and care that are available to them?

In Europe, CoHousing Communities, where groups of friends join together to create communities with individual living accommodation, and additional access to communal cooking and socialising facilities, are increasingly popular and are a successful variety of older people's housing and care. Should innovative models like this be rolled out to fit with future aspirations?

The key questions on this issue that we would like help in answering are:

When the next generation of older people are selecting their preferred accommodation, what do you think will influence their decision the most, and why?

Do you think that future generations of older people will continue to value the benefits of sheltered housing - i.e. small, easily managed accommodation with support available when needed?

Do you think that older people will appreciate the opportunity to be part of mixed communities which offer the chance for integration with younger people and families?

What could be done to avoid any form of specially built older people's accommodation being perceived as 'institutional' by future generations of older people?

In the future will demand from older people lead to the Direct Payments system being extended to sheltered housing schemes?

Do you think that in the future the European model of co-housing schemes set up by groups of friends to care for one another in later life will become more popular in this country?

Where do you think older people would like to go for information on housing and support services?

Extra care housing

Extra care housing supports older people to live independently and with dignity. It widens choice by providing older people with care and support in a housing-based setting, which meets their needs as individuals. Extra care housing schemes provide 24-hour support, meals, domestic help, leisure and recreation facilities and security.

Assisted by greater funding from central government, many local authorities have plans to increase extra care housing provision. Extra care housing can therefore be seen as a firm part of the landscape in older people's housing, and we would like to find out about the role it can play in years to come.

The questions we would ask for help in answering are:

In the future, will extra care be viewed as an alternative to residential care, and is this helpful for the way we look at meeting the care needs of future generations of older people?

Are we prepared for an upturn in demand for extra care housing in the future, and if so what should be done to meet greater demand?

Is there a risk that in the future extra care will be seen as institutionalised?

Some extra care schemes have a wide range of facilities, including a gym, day centre, on-site shop and medical centre. In the future, should all extra care schemes have these facilities? What could also be provided in extra care schemes?

How could the extra care model develop - what could the 'next step along' from extra care housing be?

Design Standards

The built environment is very important for older people's sense of well-being. Vulnerable older people also need certain design features in order to support them in everyday life. When considering the future of older people's housing and care, it is therefore important that we consider how older people's housing should be designed, or current provision remodelled, in years to come.

In the years running up to 2020, which of the following key considerations do you believe will influence the design of older people's housing and care?

- *The number of rooms*
- *The style or design of the accommodation - for example whether it is eco-friendly, modern or traditional*
- *The level of security offered*
- *The facilities available on site or nearby - for example leisure facilities, shops and restaurants*
- *The proximity to family, friends and a familiar community*
- *The level of personal support offered at home*
- *The level of housing support to help older people maintain the property*
- *Whether it is accessible for wheelchair users*

Are there any other considerations that should be made in years to come when designing older people's housing and care?

Can outmoded sheltered housing be remodelled to be fit for purpose for the future?

Support Services

Most support services in older people's housing and care are currently funded through local government under the Supporting People programme. Introduced in 2003, Supporting People has aimed to enable vulnerable people to live independently in their own homes for as long as possible.

We can expect Supporting People to remain - in some form or other - for some time. Therefore, when considering future support services, we need to begin with an examination of the Supporting People programme, before considering other possible systems for providing support to older people in their own homes.

What are the positive and negative impacts that Supporting People has had on older people?

What changes could be made to the programme to make it more effective?

*Are there any better alternatives to the Supporting People system?
If so what are they?*

Diversity and equality issues

In 2001 there were approximately 175,000 black and minority ethnic people aged over 60 in the UK. By 2016 it is anticipated that this figure will have grown to 1.8 million, and this is expected to increase further by 2020. Take up for older people's services amongst black and minority ethnic groups is well below average, however.

With this in mind, we would appreciate your help in answering the following questions:

If a preferred housing choice for older people from black and minority ethnic communities is to remain living together with their wider families, should there be specialist provision of larger family housing with design features, enabling an older person to remain in the home?

In the year 2020, what demand do you think there will be for specialised schemes that cater for particular cultural and/or linguistic communities?

It is expected that by the year 2020 other minority groups will comprise far greater numbers than they do today. It is important that the views of members of these groups, such as gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender older people are seriously considered when we look forward to older peoples housing and care in 2020. Larger numbers of older people are also 'ageing on the streets'. The requirements of this significant group of homeless people need to be considered.

With this in mind, we would welcome your views and ideas on the following issues:

Do you see people from these groups fitting into the traditional sheltered housing model?

With particular reference to older people with learning difficulties, how, if at all, should mainstream sheltered housing change to accommodate their needs?

In the future how can we make sheltered housing communities welcoming to older gay and lesbian people?

Age discrimination in a range of services is currently being tackled head on. How in the future can age discrimination be combated in older people's housing?

The market place

There are approximately 105,000 homes, mostly flats, of retirement housing for sale. A typical scheme will be a block of flats with a scheme manager, some communal facilities such as a lounge, laundry and guest suite and an alarm system for emergencies. About 90,000 of these homes have been built by private sector house builders, the remainder mostly by housing associations offering shared ownership schemes for older people unable to buy at full market value.

In addition, there are about 4,000 flats for sale offering extra care housing - retirement housing with the option of a range of care services.

Despite the almost total lack of new rented "sheltered housing" from housing associations or local authorities the private sector continues to build about 3,000 new "units" of retirement housing for sale each year. This option provides security, companionship and a way to downsize and release income from a larger home for a significant minority of older people. The private sector is also a major provider of new extra care schemes, although planning restrictions have hindered progress.

High levels of home ownership also mean that many more older people have significant equity in their property which they do not wish to see eroded.

With this in mind we would ask the following questions:

What should the role of the private sector be in housing and care for older people?

Should extra care retirement housing become the major market for the private sector, not traditional retirement housing?

How can older owner occupiers in lesser value areas be helped to afford retirement housing and remain as owner occupiers?

Telecare

Telecare is a well kept secret. But government has now begun to recognise its potential in helping to provide future housing and care solutions to the demographic challenges that face our society. £80 million announced in the 2004 Comprehensive Spending Review was targeted as funding to equip 160,000 homes with smart technology.

Telecare has the potential to re-shape the delivery of older peoples support services, enabling changes to an individual's health or environment to be detected and monitored remotely. Evidence increasingly suggests that Telecare products can enable older people to remain living in their own homes for longer, maintaining their independence and freedom of choice.

The Audit Commission, in its Assistive Technology Report in 2004, concluded: "Thus there is the tantalising possibility for public policy to meet more people's desire to remain independent for longer, while at the same time saving money overall".

Thinking about Telecare in 2020, we would like you to consider the following questions:

Traditionally, housing has been viewed as the key to provide choice and independent living for older people. Now, Telecare technologies and services have the power to facilitate a fundamental rethink of that approach. What are the barriers and how do we overcome them?

As Telecare sensors become more intelligent and their relative cost plummets over the next 15 years, their deployment may accelerate rapidly. What are the risks and implications of care becoming virtual and people becoming high-tech hermits?

Historically, Telecare has been positioned as a service to benefit older people. Beyond this important role, what other communities could the service support in the short, medium and longer term?

How well does current technology meet user needs and choice? What kinds of future developments are needed to genuinely address these issues?

What are the design implications for new build homes to best utilise a Telecare service?

To realise the benefits of Telecare, effective partnership working and pooled budgets need to become a reality. What is the best way of configuring service delivery to facilitate the benefit to users?

Telecare has lifestyle monitoring capabilities that can generate data rich information to help shape care packages. How are we to manage the tensions between user consent, privacy and other ethical issues with the benefits that the technologies can deliver?

As they age, the baby-boomer generation will be more comfortable with harnessing the benefits of technology. In the short term what can be done to build the confidence of those who could benefit from Telecare packages today?

Sheltered housing workforce issues

Sheltered housing is not just about bricks and mortar - it is, crucially, also about people, especially those working in the sector. The older people's housing workforce carries out an immensely important task in delivering high-quality services that focus on the needs of the older individual.

An examination of workforce issues is key to delivering a new vision for older people's housing. We would therefore welcome all views on how sheltered housing professionals can be supported in their various roles. In particular, scheme managers, who have the front line role and need to have both administrative skills and the ability to effectively support their residents.

We would also like to look at the following specific issues:

What knowledge, skills and personal qualities do you think that people working in sheltered housing should have?

Today, where do you think the gaps are in terms of the knowledge, skills and qualities that sheltered housing scheme managers have?

Some see sheltered housing workers moving into a more community-focused role - the best sheltered housing schemes are those where the staff promote an active social scene, welcome people from outside the scheme and offer their services to the community more widely. But many scheme managers might lack the skills, knowledge and support - or capacity - to work in this way.

How can scheme managers be assisted to fulfill this enhanced role?

Should scheme managers be replaced by peripatetic support teams or visiting wardens?

Some feel that there should be a minimum level of qualification for sheltered housing workers. Not only would this ensure the service delivered to older people is of the highest quality, it would also improve the recognition and status of those working in the sector.

We would welcome views on the level of training that should be undertaken by those who work in sheltered housing. In particular, should a qualification such as, or equivalent to, the Level 3 Certificate in Housing (Supported Housing), be the benchmark qualification that all scheme managers should hold?

What can be done to improve recruitment and retention of sheltered housing scheme managers?

How could scheme managers be trained to facilitate the extension of Direct Payments to sheltered housing schemes?

How to respond

Responses are welcome on all or indeed only part(s) of this consultation, regardless of how long or short. If you have any thoughts on related areas not mentioned in this document these would also be welcome.

Please send responses to this paper to:

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The deadline for responses is 31st July 2005.

Sponsors:

ERoSH, the national consortium for sheltered and retirement housing

Association of Social Alarm Providers
Centre for Sheltered Housing Studies

National Housing Federation



In association with:

Association of Retirement Housing Managers

Chartered Institute of Housing

Counsel & Care

Elderly Accommodation Counsel

Federation of Black Housing Organisations