



**Ideas for action:
Older people shaping local
housing policy and practice**

**Greater Manchester
Older People's
Network developing
its Housing Manifesto**



About this guide

This **'how to' guide** is part of a series produced by Care & Repair England in partnership with the Older People's Champions Group and older people's groups and organisations. The guides offer practical ideas for older people's groups and forums around the country who want to influence local housing policy, plans and actions.

The guides describe the ways that local groups have gone about raising housing issues with decision makers, their successes and lessons for others. They also show how local groups have tried different ways to involve a wider range of older people, especially those whose voices are often ignored.

At a glance

In 2017 Greater Manchester Older People's Network ran an event for older people in the Greater Manchester area to consider the housing issues that concern them.

As a result, they have produced their own housing and ageing manifesto, ***Me and My Home***, setting out a series of recommendations for housing in the area in which they live.

This is now being promoted widely as a framework for action across Greater Manchester.

1. What the Greater Manchester Older People's Network action was aiming to achieve

1.1 Aims and objectives

- To work towards an all-embracing housing manifesto for older people in Greater Manchester with a clear list of recommendations for action
- To facilitate the engagement of all older people across Greater Manchester in housing issues and to ensure older voices are heard and their priorities established
- To engage policy makers across Greater Manchester in the housing issues of concern to older people to facilitate change.

1.2 Who is involved

The Greater Manchester Older People's Network (GMOPN) was established in October 2015 following a consultation with older people in Greater Manchester.

The network is supported by Ambition for Ageing, a Big Lottery Funded programme aiming to create more age friendly places and empowering people to live fulfilling lives as they age. It is facilitated by Manchester Community Central (Macc) the support organisation for the voluntary sector in Manchester.

The aim of GMOPN is to inform and influence Greater Manchester strategies that affect older people. Membership is open to all older people living in Greater Manchester.

1.3 Developing a manifesto for housing in Greater Manchester

In June 17 the GMOPN arranged a consultation workshop which asked participants to answer three simple questions.

1. What do I need to enable me to live independently and well in my home?
2. What should housing for older people be like?
3. What should housing for older people be like in the future?

Sixty participants from older people from across Greater Manchester took part keen to see their aspirations incorporated into housing and integration strategies across the Greater Manchester area. The views expressed at this event formed the basis for the development of the manifesto.

Working with Ambition for Ageing, Care & Repair England and Macc the housing manifesto *Me and My Home* was published in October 2017 with a complementary *infographic*.

In summary, as well as setting out the circumstances and needs of older people regarding their housing in Greater Manchester, the manifesto set down several 'asks'.

1.4 The key housing priorities identified in the Manifesto - *Me and My Home*

The housing priorities identified in Me and My Home

- Improve existing housing including trustworthy reliable, affordable repairs, access to adaptations and to advice and support to get the work done
- Closer links between health and housing so that our health and independence is maintained so would like to see health professionals trained so they can offer a housing assessment, to be an integral part of the integration of housing, health and social care systems.
- Housing strategy and planning to respond positively to the housing needs of older people living in the community.
- Older people to be engaged and involved in planning, developing and delivering housing, housing services and strategies for later life.

2. Achievements

The Manifesto has been shared across Greater Manchester.

It has been sent to the Mayor and leaders of all local councils, to bodies interested in and working with older people and housing and to bodies such as the [GM Ageing Hub](#).

The Hub has set up a housing and planning group composed of officers from the GM Ageing Hub and the Greater Manchester Spatial Framework team which is working on the Greater Manchester Spatial Framework to ensure that age friendly housing is included (one of the policy requests in the Manifesto.) The group also includes [MICRA](#) and other academics and the registered providers (housing association) group.

This framework is due to be published later in 2018.

Members of GMOPN have also worked with final year architecture students on their proposals for housing in later life. Their comments and criticism will help shape the final proposals and a film of the interaction will form part of an exhibit at the British Society of Gerontologist's annual conference in Manchester in July 18.

3. Lessons learned

Older people, through lived experience, know a lot about housing and are willing and able to share both their experience and to learn from others - grasping the opportunities afforded to them to influence change.

Professionals are also learning that they can work closely with older people to build and adapt housing to meet current and future needs and aspirations.

4. Next steps

Subject to funding and support, GMOPN is looking to setting up a housing reference group to take the issues identified in the manifesto forward and develop some key priorities for action.

GMOPN is also considering how to develop greater strategic links with the [GM Ageing Hub](#) which is run by the Greater Manchester Combined Authority engaging older people with an interest in housing in their work to take forward the priority actions identified.

5. Contact

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Organisations involved in this guide

Care & Repair England

Care & Repair England is an independent charitable organisation which aims to improve older people's housing. The contact for all information on all the Ideas for action guides.

It is a Registered Society with Charitable Status Reg No 25121R.

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Older People's Housing Champions

The Older People's Housing Champions is a network of older activists who support action by older people's groups to improve housing and related services for an ageing population across England.

Website: www.housingactionblog.wordpress.com

Email: housingchampionsnetwork@gmail.com

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About Care & Repair England

Care & Repair England is an independent charitable organisation (Registered Society with Charitable Status Reg No 25121R) established in 1986 which aims to improve older people's housing. It aims to innovate, develop, promote and support practical housing initiatives and the related policy and practice which enable older people to live independently in their own homes for as long as they wish, particularly for older people living in poor or unsuitable private sector housing.

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Published 2018

Designed by The Design Box

Acknowledgement

Thanks are due to the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation for their support for this series of guides as part of a programme of work by Care & Repair England to enable more marginalised older people to influence decision making about housing and related services.