





St Monica Trust



Remarkable
research for
healthy ageing
THE DUNHILL MEDICAL TRUST



Housing LIN

Connecting people, ideas and resources

Key Findings from the RE-COV Study

Retirement Village and Extra Care Housing in England:
Operators' Experience during the COVID-19 Pandemic

Rachael Dutton, COVID-19 National Project Lead, 29 April 2021



St Monica Trust

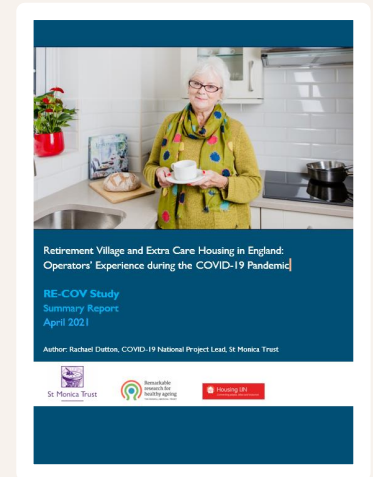
The Best Experience of Ageing



Setting Standards for
Retirement Communities

Purpose of the study

- How had the pandemic affected housing-with-care operators, their staff and residents?
- How did operators respond to the pandemic?
- What were their innovations and successes, and what were the key challenges?



Questionnaire responses

- 38 completed returned, 16 Jan – 16 Feb 2021.



Today's presentation:

- ① Extent of operators' response and resilience
- ② Evidence of impact
- ③ Top pressures and challenges
- ④ Key concerns going forward
- ⑤ Study's recommendations



1 Extent operators' response and resilience

Great lengths to:

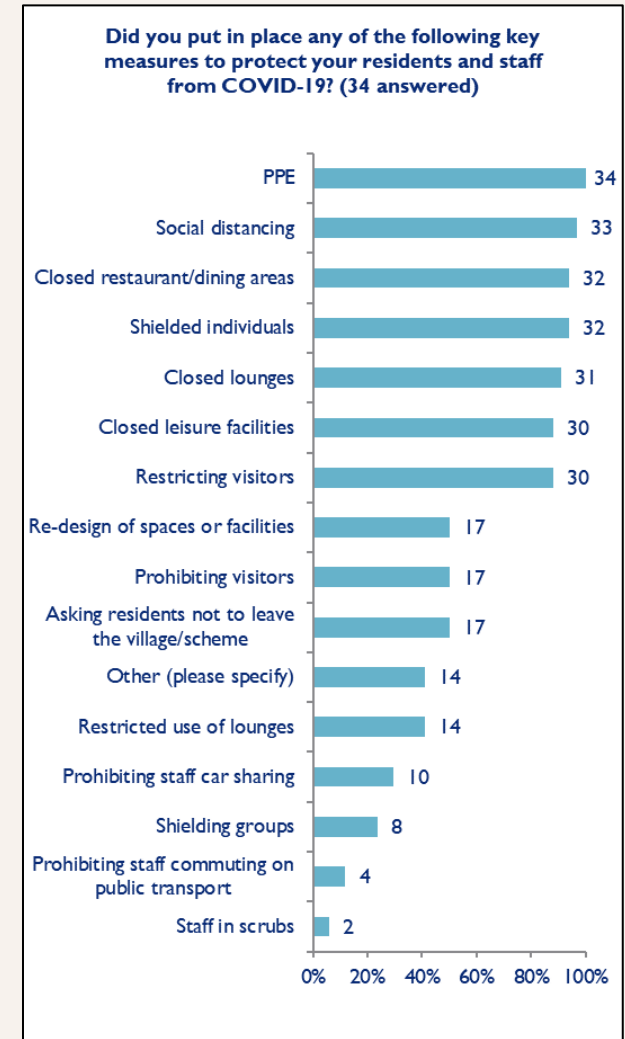
- protect residents and staff,
- support residents' daily living, well-being, social engagement, community and personal activities, and
- create other/different opportunities for positive experiences and social contact.



1 Extent operators' response

Key measures during first wave

- More than half locked down before 23 March.
- PPE / social distancing / closed communal areas and services / shielded individuals / restricted or prohibited visitors / asked residents not to leave site / re-designed spaces and facilities.



1 Extent operators' response and resilience

“A comprehensive community plan was maintained for each scheme, detailing the identification of individuals who lacked an adequate support network or had increased vulnerabilities”



Large RV&ECH operator



1 Extent operators' response and resilience

Special measures to protect health & well-being

- Site guidelines, information and support on government guidance, benefit advice, access to prescriptions, GPs and other health services incl. transport.
- Weekly food boxes, access to/help with digital technology, providing social activities and opportunities for social contact in a different way.



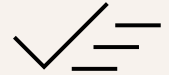
1 Extent operators' response and resilience

“We contacted each resident daily, for a welfare check and to take their orders for shop and meal deliveries. We have sent out weekly updates and had regular meetings with the residents' association to discuss all changes to the village due to the COVID-19 guidelines.”

RV operator



② Evidence of impact

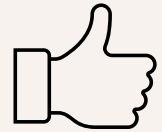


- Fewer village/scheme residents died from confirmed COVID-19 than expected (0.97%) compared to same age profile people in general population England (1.09%).
- Residents clearly gained great benefit from the communities, environment, care and special support provided by the villages and schemes.



② Evidence of impact

“I would like to thank you, from the bottom of my heart, for all the care and help received from every member of the management and staff here at [the village] during the pandemic. All the extra work organised and carried out to keep us safe has been amazing ...”



Village/scheme resident



② Evidence of impact

“We felt very safe and well looked after during lockdown. All our friends said they wished that their conditions had been as good as ours!”



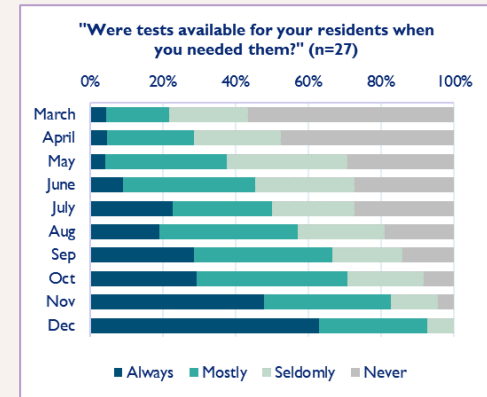
③ Top pressures and challenges

- Costs and losses far outweighed any funding or savings.
- Maintaining resident and staff well-being.
- Staffing.
- Lack of access to PPE.



③ Top pressures and challenges

- Accessibility of testing and late arrival of regular testing for all staff.
- Constant changing guidance and keeping up with the changes.
- Residents and visitors not understanding or adhering to guidance and rules.
- Lack of government leadership and guidance specific to RVs and ECH.



③ Top pressures and challenges

- Lack of understanding or awareness of housing-with-care.

“Local Resilience Forums expected housing operators to pick up customer needs, health and social care assumed a higher level of service provision on discharge from hospital.”



④ Some key concerns going forward

- Resident and staff well-being

Isolation, loneliness, reduced social contact, impact on mental and physical health, ongoing frustrations and weariness, staff morale, workload and ongoing stresses.

- Loss of revenue and financial pressures.

- Getting vaccinations completed / length of protection / complacency.

- Recruitment to frontline roles and how 'non-essential' services can be reintroduced safely.



5 Recommendations

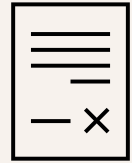
Some of the major challenges and difficulties faced by operators could be overcome by:

- Legal definition of housing-with-care widely publicised, consistently used:
increase inclusion and improved access to resources; promote awareness, understanding of the model / its important role in broader care sector.
- Better access to funding and financial support.



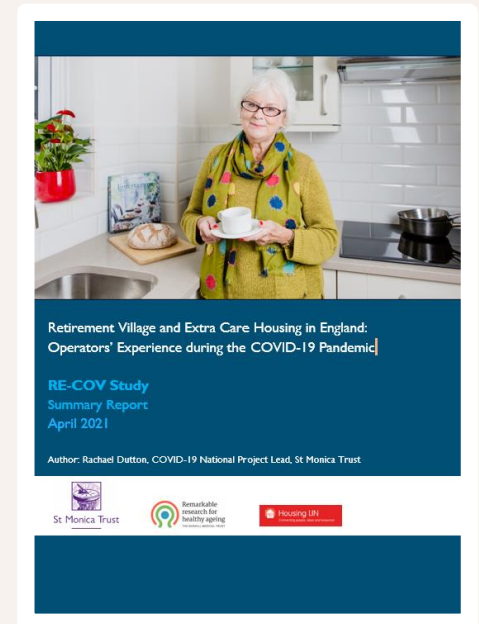
5 Recommendations

- Flexibility in contracts for commissioned services for essential additional staffing.
- Guidance developed in consultation with experts and with realistic implementation time.
- Future villages and schemes should be designed 'pandemic ready'.



Links to Reports and Questionnaire

- <https://www.stmonicastrust.org.uk/re-cov-study>
- <https://www.housinglin.org.uk/Topics/type/RE-COV-Study/>



Thank you



Advisory Group Members

- Jane Ashcroft: Chief Executive, Anchor Hanover & Board Member, National Housing Federation (NHF).
- Kathleen Dunmore: Housing Policy Consultant, Retirement Housing Group.
- Aileen Evans: Group Chief Executive, Grand Union Housing Group, and President, Chartered Institute of Housing (CIH).
- John Galvin: Chief Executive, Elderly Accommodation Counsel (EAC).
- Shirley Hall: Head of Innovation and Wellbeing, ExtraCare Charitable Trust.
- Liz Jones: Policy Director, National Care Forum (NCF).
- Michael Voges: Executive Director, The Associated Retirement Community Operators (ARCO).
- David Williams: Chief Executive, St Monica Trust, and Board Member, National Care Forum (NCF).



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Questions, feedback or
contributions of experience and insight:

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<https://www.housinglin.org.uk/Discuss/>



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