



DEMENTIA AND HOUSING WORKING GROUP

Terms of Reference

Definition

The Dementia and Housing Working Group (DHWG) aims to promote and influence the contribution of the housing sector in improving the health, wellbeing and quality of life for people living with dementia.

As the only national group focused on housing and dementia, we are not a talking shop. The DHWG brings together a wide range of volunteer stakeholders with an action-oriented ethos and a track record of producing tangible outcomes.

With nearly 950,000 people living with dementia in the UK and 70% who live in the community, we feel it is imperative to improve standards and drive forward recommendations 34-36 of the APPG report on housing and dementia, utilising our combined knowledge to help others. It's so important to promote the role of the housing sector in enabling people with dementia to live independently in a suitable home environment in accordance with their needs and aspirations.

The Dementia and Housing Working Group brings together a wide range of stakeholders to focus specifically on housing and dementia with a view to promoting the role of the housing sector in enabling people with dementia to live independently in a suitable home environment in accordance with their needs and aspirations. The D&HWG comprises housing providers, professionals and trade bodies, academic researchers and the health sector. It also has links to a number of government departments and related agencies, including the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, Department of Health and Social Care, NHS England and Public Health England. The D&HWG works across England.

The housing sector includes:

1. Organisations which design, develop, adapt, repair or manage housing
2. A large workforce with varied roles from home adaptations and essential repairs, to housing management, information, advice and support
3. A range of services apart from housing provision delivered by housing organisations, sometimes in partnership with others, such as dementia cafés, home from hospital schemes, telecare services, support, and other wellbeing services

Aims and objectives

We will focus on:

Information | Insight | Influence

- To improve outcomes for people living with dementia – whether that be through housing, policy or design
- To push up industry standards in housing and dementia
- To act as a problem solver for housing and care businesses when it comes to dementia
- To share knowledge and grow usage of the DHWG Dementia Information Hub
- To support and encourage dementia awareness training

Why are we here?

- **Lack of understanding** of dementia friendly housing standards
- **Inadequate conversations** around housing options post diagnosis
- **Limited dementia training** programmes for housing professionals
- **No other national groups** taking this agenda forward.

Housing design isn't taking into account the needs of people living with dementia, not only for new builds, but also to enable people to live as long as possible in their own homes. There is an ongoing lack of investment in supporting housing professionals to become dementia aware in order to understand how they can better support people living with dementia.

Delivery on objectives

The group will deliver these objectives by:

Information

- **Design** - Producing a clear dementia design guide that housing providers should be closely aligned to when building new homes or retrofitting existing stock
- **Future needs** - Ensuring future housing is fit for purpose for people living with dementia
- **Knowledge** - Sharing good practice, knowledge and expertise, maximising the use of our time and enabling people to learn from each other, expanding our Dementia Information Hub
- **Health** - Pushing to get housing included in solutions around health and social care
- **Technology** – Growing sector understanding on and use of how smart housing and assistive technology can enable people with dementia live well at home

Insight

- **Understanding needs** - Ensuring all staff in housing related roles are trained to understand the needs of people living with dementia
- **Service guidance** - Training to ensure staff can deliver services in the right way within existing stock
- **Diversity** – Developing a better understanding of inclusion surrounding dementia
- **Housing options** - Ensuring the public are aware of housing options for people affected by dementia and guidance for moving in

- **Carers** – Looking at effective assistance and support in communities for carers and people living with dementia

Influence

- **Policy** - Informing and influencing future government plans for health, housing and care so that the needs of people living with dementia are recognised, supported and resourced
- **APPG** - Aligning APPG recommendations to relevant national/regional policy
- **Funding** - Seeking dementia specific grants to be introduced by local authority housing policies and practice
- **Delivery** - Supporting the delivery of Adult Social Care capital allocations to be dementia-ready

Membership and meetings

The group will meet approximately quarterly and on an ad hoc basis as necessary. Meetings will be used to share information, test out products and initiatives, plan for the future and agree group and individual actions. Between meetings members will communicate via e-mail. Sub-groups may be established to undertake specific tasks.

As there is no dedicated staff resource, the group has to be realistic about what it can commit to. Housing 21 provides the Secretariat. Members of the group make no financial contribution but are expected to actively contribute to the achievement of the group's aims. They should do this by:

- Attending and contributing to meetings, when possible
- Responding to requests for information, comments, good practice examples, etc
- Writing at least one blog a year to share their particular area of expertise and experience on issues relating to housing and dementia
- Promoting the group and its aims by publishing a link to Terms of Reference on their own websites
- Using their contacts and networks to disseminate information
- Collaborating with colleagues on specific pieces of work

The aim of the group is not to accumulate members, but to have representation across relevant bodies and organisations, and for all members to use their own contacts and networks to spread the word.

Organisations who wish to become members of DHWG should contact Vanessa Pritchard-Wilkes via email on Vanessa.Pritchard-Wilkes@housing21.org.uk in the first instance. Their membership will be evaluated on an ad hoc basis by the group. New members will be included if they represent an important perspective currently missing from the group.

Review

The Terms of Reference will be reviewed on an annual basis or sooner if a major change makes the current ToR no longer fit for purpose.

<https://www.housinglin.org.uk/housing-networks/dementia-and-housing-working-group/about/>

Date: April 2023