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# Meeting the Housing Needs of an Ageing Population in Wales: Report of Recommendations

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# Meeting the Housing Needs of an Ageing Population in Wales: Report of Recommendations

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## Acknowledgements

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## Summary

- Wales' population is ageing, particularly its oldest old citizens, and this demographic trend will continue into the future. Older people are heterogeneous in terms of their social, cultural, financial and social resources. This diversity needs to be recognised and embraced in planning ahead for housing requirements.
- To date, the supply of housing with care accommodation which meets policy goals of promoting independent and autonomous living for older people is inadequate. A long-term “vision” is needed which promotes the provision of affordable, “future-proofed” and “age-sustainable” housing in Wales for future generations.
- Key preliminary recommendations are to:
  - develop a *housing strategy addressing older people's housing requirements*, and encourage Welsh Government to work towards a *long-term vision* of providing affordable, “future-proofed” and “age-sustainable” housing for future generations;
  - review planning policies and procedures to include older people's accommodation, and require Local Authorities to develop *population-based housing needs assessments*;
  - identify *brown-field sites* suitable for housing with care developments, including rural sites;
  - ensure new housing with care provisions reflect Welsh “Quality Kite Mark” standards (e.g. life time home, accessibility and eco-sustainable, innovative design features);
  - ensure that Welsh Government promotes integrated working and funding for housing with care and independent living across *health, housing and social care* sectors; maintains public investments in existing home adaptations, community-support and independent living initiatives; and reviews new products and services (e.g. equity release; shared-ownership; “moving on” services) to increase housing finance options;
  - increase public and service provider awareness about housing with care options through education, training, information and advice services, particularly for older people in low incomes groups, using new and existing networks (e.g. Housing LIN).



# Introduction

## Objective

The Minister for Communities and Tackling Poverty requested evidence on the challenges an ageing population pose to housing policy in Wales and what the Welsh Government might do to address these challenges. The specific questions to be addressed included:

1. What challenges does an ageing population pose for Welsh housing?
2. What can Wales learn from international experience in the provision of housing for older people?
3. How can the Welsh Government best achieve the aim of ensuring that older people have access to housing and related services that supports their needs and promotes independence by 2023?
4. What choices does the Welsh Housing Market offer older people?
5. What is currently being done by housing providers – developers, local authorities, housing associations etc. – and the voluntary sector to address the challenge?
6. What housing options are currently available or could be developed in the future for older people on low incomes?

## Process and context

The PPIW commissioned Dr Sarah Hillcoat-Nallétamby to undertake this assignment in a two part approach. Firstly, a rapid evidence review was conducted to assimilate evidence on the current state of housing for older people in Wales (see PPIW report ‘Housing for Older People in Wales: An Evidence Review’). The evidence review provides a background to the context in which population ageing is evolving in Wales. Below is a summary of the key findings from the evidence review which provides the context to this report:

- Wales has an increasing and increasingly diverse ageing population. This presents a challenge for Welsh housing;
- The majority of people over 65 in Wales are home owners – the likelihood of moving in later life decreases as we age, and is primarily in response to changing needs for support, or unanticipated events such as loss of a partner or the onset of illness;
- The increase in the likelihood of residential relocation around the pre-retirement phase in Wales could provide a window of opportunity for intervention or prevention programme initiatives, and broaden options and choices for ageing in place (“staying put”) or relocating (“moving on”);

- Welsh Government does not collect core data on the profile of its tenants, at a national level, although individual landlords will all have data about the characteristics of their tenants. As a result, we have very limited information on the finer detail of tenure and household type and cannot determine the number of older people currently living in extra care, specialist or sheltered housing. Predictive modelling tools such as the SHOP (Strategic Housing for Older People) tool developed by the Housing Learning and Improvement Network (Housing LIN) may help to fill this evidence gap;
- Currently, housing options in Wales range from general needs housing with or without some degree of support (e.g. adaptations, telecare, floating support) to sheltered housing, extra care housing and nursing and residential care homes, with some limited development in co-operative and co-housing models;
- A rapidly ageing population represents an excellent opportunity for those involved in the property development sector to develop innovative living environment models, incorporating “age sustainable”, “lifetime” and “smart” design features. However, the barriers faced by developers and commissioners for expansion of housing for older people are limiting factors;
- Wales follows an ‘ageing in place’ approach to housing older people, and our commitment to improving the quality of life and independence of older people is widely recognised across Europe as unique and innovative. The challenge for Wales is to ensure that we increase the supply of suitable and affordable accommodation and service options, whether it be so that older people can choose to age in place and “stay put”, or age in place by “moving on;”
- An ageing population provides opportunities and challenges for the housing, health, social care and third sectors; effective planning, resource management and service delivery will therefore require widespread integration of activities and partnership working across community stakeholder groups – including older citizens - and policy areas.

### **Expert workshop and report of recommendations**

This report documents initial discussions and preliminary recommendations which emerged from an expert workshop held in June 2015 attended by experts from Wales, the rest of the UK and other European countries. The group was tasked with identifying the challenges that population ageing poses for housing needs in Wales, and to begin a scoping exercise to outline what the Welsh Government might do to meet them. Experts from different sectors and organisations were invited to participate to discuss the six questions identified by the Minister (see Appendix 1 for list of participants). Based on written feedback and evidence provided by

experts prior to the workshop, plus subsequent workshop discussion, the main issues and challenges identified for each question are documented in Section 1 of this report. Section 2 draws initial conclusions and sets out preliminary recommendations.

### **The importance of planning and developing older people's housing in Wales**

Establishing recommendations about housing which are specific to older people and the context of population ageing is important for several reasons:

- First, the context in which older people make choices and decisions about their housing requirements will be influenced by specific factors which do not generally affect other people in different phases of the life course. Later life normally means **fixed incomes**, so decision-making about whether to “stay put”, modify and adapt or to “move on” to a different living environment – potentially one offering more care and support - is likely to be more constrained;
- Second, there will be **significant variations across different socio-economic groups of older people** in terms of the financial resources they can muster to cover housing and social care costs. For generations who have benefitted from the “right to buy” scheme, they may be “***equity rich, but cash poor***” so their housing does not provide them with an immediate source of income; depending upon their social and economic trajectories in life, others will always have been on ***low or inadequate incomes***; then there are those who, depending upon where they live and how they have lived, will find themselves ***both equity and cash rich***;
- Third, regardless of these different financial scenarios, **older people are generally much less likely than other age groups to be mobile** – either in terms of residential mobility or in terms of their own physical mobility (e.g. giving up driving; poor or non-existent public or community transport services; changes to personal physical mobility capacities). This means they are more likely than other age groups to be **vulnerable to social isolation and disconnection from their wider social support networks**;
- Fourth, older people are also more likely (either for lifestyle or “no option” reasons) to be living in ***rural areas***, where access to support services can be very challenging, with associated risks of increased social vulnerabilities. This poses challenges for housing requirements either because for those wishing to “stay put”, existing housing stock is difficult and costly to adapt; or because “moving on” may not be an option because of lack of affordable and suitably adapted housing;
- Fifth, the ***health and social care needs*** that older people experience may also create specific housing needs. For example, adaptations needed to move around a home;



whether the home can actually be adapted; the lack of choice of already adapted or readily adaptable homes;

- Finally, older people will also have different attitudes and behaviours towards planning ahead for their future housing and care needs. As a nation, the UK places **sentimental, cultural and economic value in home ownership** so choices about “moving on” or “staying put” can be emotionally charged. Weighing up the “pros and cons” of moving home or changing tenure status can also be affected by negative cultural perceptions about older people’s housing options (anything but your own home = institution). Increasing knowledge, information and advice (KI&A) about the variety of housing options available to older people in Wales will therefore help to highlight both positive benefits of moving, but equally assist those wishing to “stay put” to make informed choices.

The next part of this report details the discussion and recommendations that emerged from the PPIW expert workshop on older people’s housing held in June 2015.

## Section 1: Workshop Discussion: Key lessons learnt

### 1. What challenges does an ageing population pose for Welsh housing?<sup>1</sup>

**A. Ensuring an adequate, good quality and affordable supply of mainstream and specialist<sup>2</sup> housing** across all tenures which meets older people’s needs and preferences, and provides real choice (Pannell, Aldridge & Kenway, 2012). The challenges for both existing and new build housing stock are to provide accommodation appropriately adapted or designed to meet the diversity of older people’s care and support requirements, as well as their social and economic circumstance. Good quality housing reduces risks to health (e.g. excess winter deaths) and wellbeing (e.g. fuel poverty through lack of income, insulation, etc.), prevents unnecessary hospitalisation, and ultimately, reduces social and health care costs (IPC, 2012; Burholt & Windle, 2006; WHO, 2009; Parrot, 2000; Thomas Pocklington & RNIB, 2010).

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<sup>1</sup> One participant at the expert workshop suggested the question ought to be “what challenges does Welsh housing pose for an ageing population?”

<sup>2</sup> Specialist housing or accommodation refers to models such as extra-care, sheltered housing, co-operatives, co-housing, as distinct from residential or nursing home provisions.

The **existing housing stock** poses challenges both in terms of its **suitability** for retrofit or adaptations<sup>3</sup>, and the **financial costs** involved in modifications, maintenance and repair (Welsh Government, March 2015). These are ongoing challenges if both social (e.g. sheltered housing built by Local Authorities 40-50 years ago) and privately owned Welsh housing stock are to meet housing quality standards (Welsh Government, Oct. 2014). In the current climate of reductions in public investment, issues of housing-related costs can be particularly challenging for older people living on low incomes; for the minority of homeowners who carry housing-related debt into retirement (McKay et al., 2008; Overton, 2010); and potentially for those who are “equity rich but cash poor” (House of Lords, 2013) and unable to, or unsure how to, access their financial resources to cover these costs.

**Issue/challenge:** availability of grant and/or subsidy to support home improvements and fair access to equity release options are barriers to “staying put”.

**Recommendation:** review of public investments and grant streams to support ongoing home adaptation and improvement services.

The **financial costs of increasing the supply of new build specialist housing** are currently a risk for organisations and developers (e.g. funds for capital investment to meet build costs or purchase of land; limited availability of capital grant for social housing<sup>4</sup>); they are a barrier to mainstreaming and increasing these options, unless costs are transferred to tenants through high rental and/or service charges, cross subsidy from potential sales or are covered through high levels of public subsidy. This makes it difficult to develop more **innovative housing with care models**, for example those which cater to lifetime home design standards (Department of Communities and Local Government, July 2012) and can accommodate changing needs across the life course (e.g. expanding and contracting household size; changing health and mobility needs; space to accommodate carers or visitors) as advocated by the “care ready” HAPPI design principles (Homes and Communities Agency et al., 2009). Investment in housing supply in rural areas is particularly challenging, both because of poor infrastructures, and because of the need to identify appropriate development sites which offer sufficient potential for property development.

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<sup>3</sup> Personal communication from Professor Sheila Peace, Open University (June 2015). A new researcher/service provider initiative in England is underway to understand how lifetime home standards can be applied to existing housing stock (“*Turning your housing into a lifetime home*”). This is a Care & Repair England and OU initiative, bringing together a range of stakeholders (e.g. property agents, older clients, occupational therapists).

<sup>4</sup> Welsh Government (December 2014). This year’s budget in Wales <http://gov.wales/docs/caecd/publications/141202-meg-en.pdf>.

**Issue/challenge:** facilitating access to capital to meet the financial costs for clients, organisations and developers is a key barrier to stimulate the supply of affordable, “age friendly” housing, including housing with care.

**Recommendation:** review of public investments, grant streams and socially innovative options (e.g. crowd funding) to support capital investments needed to procure a greater supply of housing with care and independent living.

**Recommendation:** research to identify suitable brown-field sites as potential areas for property development in Wales, notably rural areas.

**B. Creating a policy agenda focusing specifically on older people's housing requirements**, including ***planning, sustainability*** and ***service integration*** issues.

***Policy:*** In Wales, this ***policy focus*** is lacking. The *Welsh Housing Supply Task Force* (Welsh Government, Jan. 2014) does not, for example, make specific reference to the challenges and opportunities posed by population ageing, although these have been recognised throughout the successive waves of *Wales' Strategy for Older People* (Welsh Government, 2013) and its delivery plans. This is in contrast to the English context (House of Lords, 2013). The commissioning of this piece of work by PPIW is an acknowledgement by Welsh Government of this lack of policy focus and is a welcome development. However, taking forward such a policy agenda and the other recommendations outlined in this report will have resource implications for Welsh Government, given the current limited coverage given to older people's housing issues.

**Issue/challenge:** lack of clear Welsh Government policy focus on housing for older people in Wales.

**Recommendation:** establish independently chaired Welsh, cross-sector task force on housing policy for older people tasked with outlining the priorities, challenges, opportunities and possible solutions to increasing the supply of housing for older people in Wales by 2023, and beyond.

***Planning:*** The ***Welsh planning system*** needs to be more pro-active and forward-looking at local and national levels, specifically in terms of responding to older people's housing requirements and providing clear guidelines to Local Planning Authorities, in an effort to respond to local needs. A recent review completed by McCarthy & Stone of all Local Development Plans in Wales showed that only 11 of the 25 WLAs had a local policy plan focusing specifically on the housing needs of older, owner-occupiers (Thomas, 2014). One of its proposed recommendations to Planning Policy Wales (Welsh Government, July

2014) is that more attention be given to the need for older person's accommodation, and specifically that the "Development plans must include an authority-wide target for affordable housing (expressed as numbers of homes ... (and) take account of the anticipated levels of finance available for affordable housing including public subsidy, and the level of developer contribution that can realistically be sought including the robust appraisal of specialist forms of housing" (Welsh Government, July 2014, Section 4.1.5 and Table 3).

The ongoing consultations on the "Developments of National Significance" (DNS) (Welsh Government, May 2015), a new category of planning application introduced in the Planning (Wales) Bill, could be a useful platform for such recommendations.

**Sustainability:** To strengthen successful ageing (Phillips, Ajrouch & Hillcoat-Nallétamby, 2010), housing developments for older people need to be an integral part of **sustainable community development strategies**. This means investment not just in housing, but in public and private local transport options to facilitate individual mobility into the community (e.g. mobility-scooter pathways; communal taxi services), access to amenities (e.g. shops or cash points in walking or scooter distance), community hubs (e.g. libraries) and support service infrastructures, particularly in rural areas, (Wales Rural Observatory, 2013). In turn, this can help minimise risks of social isolation, loneliness and vulnerability amongst older age groups, consolidate social cohesion and maximise informal support. Existing initiatives to provide robust methods of assessing the physical, built dimensions of urban (Dunstan et al., 2005) and rural environments, such as the OPERAT – Older People's External Residential Assessment Tool currently being adapted to rural Wales<sup>5</sup>, will provide a further means of assessing the age-friendly suitability of new housing initiatives.

**Issue/challenge:** address Wales' currently inadequate local and national level planning provisions in order to stimulate increased supply of housing for older people

**Recommendation:** review planning policy in Wales to identify barriers to provision of specialist accommodation for older people, and their integration into local health and wellbeing plans;

**Recommendation:** the integration of older people's housing requirements as part of the Planning (Wales) Bill consultations on "Developments of National Significance" (Welsh Government, May 2006).

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<sup>5</sup> OPERAT – Older People's External Residential Assessment Tool available at <http://www.opanwales.org.uk/en/research-portfolio.html> for Welsh rural context

**Service integration:** There needs to be an *integrated services approach* and *cross-sector working* in order to meet older people's housing, social and health care requirements, as set out for example, under the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014. For example, in England, both the Departments of Health and the Homes and Communities, working with local Housing and Social Care departments have made financial investments in extra-care housing, whereas in Wales, funding for this type of housing has only been sourced through the Social Housing Grant (Welsh Assembly Government, April 2006) and Housing Finance Grant. A good example of an integrated approach to service delivery when social care and health resources are combined is in Swindon's SEQOL community-level programme, designed primarily to avoid hospital admission for vulnerable adults.<sup>6</sup>

As a significant proportion of older people in Wales live in *rural areas*, where problems of service access and mobility are particularly acute, the focus needs to be on initiatives which integrate housing for older people into broader community development strategies.

**Issue/challenge:** fragmented working and funding across housing, health, social care and third sectors.

**Recommendation:** establish a cabinet sub-committee on *health, housing, social care* and the *third sector* to identify strategic approaches to integrated, cross-sector working and funding for housing with care and independent living.

**C. Remedying a lack of knowledge, information and advice (KI&A)** about housing with care options amongst the general public and service providers. More specialist information and targeted advice services are required to *raise public awareness* about housing options ("staying put" or "moving on"), shift negative perceptions about older people's housing (e.g. older people's accommodation = institutionalised lives) and encourage *pro-active planning* (rather than re-active to a crisis). These activities need to be in tandem with a real increase in housing supply to ensure the "choice" agenda is being met in Wales.

This awareness raising could also aim to encourage people to consider relocating to areas of existing or expanding service provision, notably for those in *rural areas* (the anti-thesis to the popular TV programmes about "Home and Away" or "Home in the Country"); and to create awareness of the longer-term implications of pre-retirement moves to rural or coastal location for life-style preferences.

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<sup>6</sup>Housing LIN website. <http://www.housinglin.org.uk/Topics/type/resource/?cid=9135>.

Thus far, initiatives to increase KI&A about housing and care options for older people have relied heavily on the medium of the internet (e.g. Elderly Accommodation Counsel; *First Stop* in England; HOOP online housing options assessment toolkit; housing checklists about the moving process) (Age UK, May 2015), but are not generally accompanied by any ***practical service package*** for older people which can help crystallise the decision-making process about “moving on” or “staying put”.

Similarly, there is an urgent need for those working in the sector to be better informed about the housing choices older people face, and to access professional networks that can support peer-to-peer learning and improvement.

**Issue/challenge:** change public perceptions and awareness about housing options for older people; encourage pro-active planning for housing and care needs; reach those who may be interested in “moving on” services (e.g. Care & Repair client base).

**Recommendation:** identify national and local-level networks of agencies and organisations which could support the development of KI&A, training, education and targeted service activities to promote housing options for independent living, and pro-active planning, particularly for older people in low-income and rural dwelling groups.

**D. Ensuring that the supply of housing for older people is responsive to population-level trends, and flexible to changing individual lifestyle and support requirements.**

Housing developments need to be responsive at national and regional levels to migration, urbanisation and rural decline. *International and/or internal migration* of older age groups can potentially present problems for sustainability of local housing and service infrastructures (Green, Evandrou & Falkingham, 2009; Uren & Goldring, 2007), but equally, if planned for, may boost local economies (Wiseman, 1980), particularly in areas experiencing rural decline, provided they are seen as integral to broader community development and sustainability strategies.

**Issue/challenge:** make housing for an ageing population central to local and national-level community sustainability, health and social care strategies, notably in rural areas

**Recommendation:** develop a strategic approach to urban and rural housing planning and provision for older people as part of broader sustainable community development initiatives.

***Changing lives:*** gradual changes or “triggers” in later life such as the slow onset of disability, the sudden loss of a partner (ONS, Dec. 2014); or unanticipated hospitalisation

can mean that previous housing is no longer suitable for current needs (Peace et al., 2007). Moving home is challenging regardless of income level (Hillcoat-Nallétamby & Ogg, 2013), but if provided with incentives, advice and support services older people may be willing and empowered to **plan their housing** with a view to “moving on” or “staying put” for lifestyle reasons or the need for more supportive environments (Pennington, 2013; Stirling, 2011).

**Potential positive outcomes of relocation** could be increased circulation of existing social and private housing stock across different age groups (Wood, 2013), and at the individual level, releasing equity for owner occupiers, improving physical health and social wellbeing (e.g. feeling more secure and safe) (Pannell, Aldridge & Kenway, April 2012) and reducing the likelihood of moving at a time of crisis, notably to residential or nursing contexts. Evidence suggests however, that options for relocation vary depending upon income spectrum, with greater likelihood of delayed moves for low income households once health and support needs become acute (Pennington, 2013).

**Issue/challenge:** facilitating housing choices and decisions about “moving on” or “staying put” by improving services and products which can help people plan their housing needs.

**Recommendation:** increase availability of, and access to services and products which support planning and decision-making about “moving on” or “staying put”, particularly for older people living on low incomes where options are more limited. Models such as the “First Stop”<sup>7</sup> online service provided by the Elderly Accommodation Counsel England could provide a benchmark for adaptation to the Welsh context; and could potentially be linked to practical support at local-area levels through existing service networks like Care & Repair Cymru or the Supporting People programme.

**E. Recognising the diversity of the older population and listen to their voices as consumers.** There is no “one size fits all” solution to meeting older people’s housing needs. These will vary depending upon socio-cultural, economic, physical and cognitive health circumstances, as well as particular life course trajectories (e.g. changes in marital or employment status can influence financial resources and informal support networks in later life).

At present, about 42,000 people in Wales have **dementia**, with prevalence much higher amongst those aged 80 or more<sup>8</sup>. These figures are projected to increase by over 30% by

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<sup>7</sup>Elderly Accommodation Counsel website: <http://www.firststopcareadvice.org.uk/>

<sup>8</sup> NHS Wales: Health in Wales: <http://www.wales.nhs.uk/healthtopics/conditions/dementia>

2021 and to 44% for some rural areas (Welsh Assembly Government and Alzheimer's Society, n.d.), yet there is hardly any housing existing or being developed to cater for this group of older citizens. Despite Welsh Government's commitment to supporting the Welsh "Dementia Supportive Communities" initiative, there is no clear reference to considering housing as part of the panoply of dementia-related services which need to be developed (op. cit). In England, the Guinness Group (The Guinness Partnership, 2015) have recently published a useful guide for housing organisations which sets out a strategic approach to become a dementia-friendly organisation.

The needs of **minority groups** including different ethnic or LGBT communities for example (Willis et al., 2014); those with different and potentially complex health and social care needs (e.g. long-term physical health conditions with mental health conditions such as dementia) (Naylor et al. 2012); or life style trajectories (e.g. older people leaving prison or homeless) will also need to be catered for to accommodate older people's diverse housing requirements (Means, 2007).

Part of the challenge in addressing this diversity is to ensure that policy-makers, planners, service and housing providers **engage pro-actively with older people**, to develop a better understanding of their preferences and gain a consumer-led approach to meeting housing and service-related needs. Recent research on outcome-based social work has demonstrated how practice in health and social care with older people is enhanced when informed by what participants - older people, carers, staff, organisations and researchers - think matters (Andrews et al., 2015).

Being responsive and "listening" also means acknowledging that housing in later life goes beyond "bricks and mortar", to understanding our longstanding **attachments to places and spaces within and beyond the home** (Heywood, Oldman & Means, 2002); so engaging older people in housing development processes will maximise the potential for developing age-sustainable community connections.

**Issue/challenge:** to ensure housing provisions can cater to the needs and preferences of very diverse older stakeholder groups.

**Recommendation:** based on the latest available population-level primary and secondary data sources, develop local-authority housing needs assessments which builds on the existing Local Authority guidance (WG & WGLA, Nov. 2014; WAG, March 2006) and includes specific criteria for assessing housing needs for older people.



**F. Creating a vision for the future:** there is a need to change public perceptions and knowledge about housing options for older people. Service providers and the business community can contribute by broadening their focus to encompass “inclusive housing design” principles and to create housing stock which will be “future-proofed” and “age-integrated” (as opposed to “age-segregated”).

## **2. What can Wales learn from the international experience in the provision of housing for older people?)**

**A. Draw on existing knowledge hubs.** Welsh Government has recently awarded pump-priming funding to the English *Housing Learning and Improvement Network* (HLIN) to extend its work into the Welsh context. The Housing LIN, which previously managed the Department of Health's Extra Care Housing capital programme, is a network and knowledge hub for housing, health and social care professionals engaged in planning, commissioning, designing, funding, building and managing housing with care for older people<sup>9</sup>.

In Wales, the Housing LIN will provide opportunities to share learning on development techniques, funding models and design insights; promote knowledge and innovation exchange between various stakeholders on market developments and growth in construction; offer a platform to improve integrated working across housing, health, social care and third sectors; promote extra-housing based on perspectives of older people and provide opportunities for showcasing innovative policy and practice developments.

The Housing LIN's ***Housing for Ageing Population Panel for Innovation (HAPPI)*** (commissioned by the Homes and Communities Agency, on behalf of Communities and Local Government and the Department of Health), considers best approaches to addressing the challenge of providing homes to meet older people's future needs and aspirations. The Housing LIN has set out ***recommendations and design criteria***, runs a ***national housing design award scheme*** and has developed a free, ***online analysis tool*** – ***SHOP@<sup>10</sup>*** - which can be used by local authorities and providers to help identify potential demand for different types of specialist housing.

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<sup>9</sup>*About the Housing LIN* <http://www.housinglin.org.uk/AboutHousingLIN/>

<sup>10</sup> English Housing LIN: <http://www.housinglin.org.uk/Topics/browse/HousingExtraCare/ExtraCareStrategy/SHOP/SHOPAT/WatisSHOPAT/>

**Recommendation:** establish if and how Wales can be integrated into the existing English Housing LIN network.

**B. Learn from existing benchmark or “good practice” initiatives for supported housing across Europe and beyond.** The English Housing LIN provides UK, European and broader international benchmarking and learning opportunities through its networks and in particular, its **case studies**. In Northern European and Scandinavian contexts, **co-housing models** have been successfully developed and some models are emerging in the UK (e.g. the Hanover’s scheme in London).

European-level initiatives to develop **guidelines for the design of housing for older people** have led Brighton and Hove City Council to provide a “good practice guide” for older person’s housing design, as part of a European project *Welfare Housing Policies for Senior Citizens (Wel\_hops)*. The guide provides learning resources and non-technical guide for all stakeholders involved in housing design for older people<sup>11</sup>.

In France, a recent government report on adapting society for ageing populations (CNAV et ANAH, 2013) has placed emphasis on the need for strategic investment in increasing the range of **intermediate housing** (housing in between own home and residential/nursing care) for older people who decide to move, and which incorporates innovative architectural and design features (Nowik et Thalineau, 2014)<sup>12</sup>.

In Ireland, **innovative housing with support models** have been developed to empower older people to self-manage their lives, and remain connected to their social environments, by following holistic and cost effective design principles which combine environmental structures (e.g. location, proximity to services), supportive and cost effective service features, with ICT technologies and assistive devices. An example of this type of design is the **Great Northern Haven initiative in Dundalk**, an ambient-assisted living smart housing complex for older people embedded in the community, and which integrates sustainable housing design, smart living technologies and person-centred community and health support services.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> Wel\_hops: Welfare Housing Policies for Senior Citizens. Retrieved at <http://www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/content/housing/general-housing/welhops-welfare-housing-policies-senior-citizens-0>

<sup>12</sup> Some interesting examples of “senior housing” in the French context can be found here: <http://www.capresidencesseniors.com/habitat-groupe-pour-senior-1785/>

<sup>13</sup> Netwell Centre, Dundalk Institute of Technology <http://www.netwellcentre.org/about-us/resources.html> and [http://www.mco.ie/projects/single/great\\_northern\\_haven\\_dundalk/](http://www.mco.ie/projects/single/great_northern_haven_dundalk/)

In other countries, the needs of *minority communities* (e.g. LGBT) have been met through innovative examples of community support and friendship networks; one such example is the SAGE Naturally Occurring Retirement Community in Harlem, USA (Carr & Ross, 2013).

Although benchmarking and learning from existing international good practice examples is valuable, we still need to consider whether these models can be adapted readily to local, devolved Welsh contexts, given differences in planning laws, welfare and subsidy structures, land availability etc.

**Recommendation:** use these international design initiatives to inform Welsh Government's future vision for sustainable, affordable and inclusive housing in the context of population ageing.

**Recommendation:** develop a housing with care "Quality-Kite Mark" benchmark of housing design and service criteria for Wales.

### **C. Recognise the initiatives already taken by other devolved nations in the UK to planning for older people's housing needs.**

There has been an updated *DCLG planning policy for England (National Planning Practice Guidance 20-21 March 2015)*<sup>14</sup> which strengthens policies around housing for older people, and recognises that delivery of such housing has now become 'critical'. The Ministerial Statement presented to Parliament notes:

- a new requirement for local planning authorities to ensure that Local Plans recognise the need to provide diverse housing types for older people (e.g. accessible mainstream housing such as bungalows, step-free apartments, and sheltered or extra care housing, retirement housing and residential care homes); establish criteria to indicate when this housing will be permitted if not in the immediate term, and set appropriate building targets (NPPG, new para 006);
- The need to provide more options for older people to move (NPPG, new para 021);
- Local authorities should work with providers of specialist housing for older people when planning their development needs (NPPG, new para 007);

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<sup>14</sup>See the following links for several updates to the England *National Planning Practice Guidance*  
<http://planningguidance.planningportal.gov.uk/revisions/2a/021/>;  
<http://planningguidance.planningportal.gov.uk/revisions/2a/007/>;  
<http://planningguidance.planningportal.gov.uk/revisions/12/006/>;  
<http://planningguidance.planningportal.gov.uk/revisions/3/037/>;

- Strengthened policies around housing and land assessments (NPPG, new para 037).

In Scotland, there is an updated **Scottish Planning Policy** which now requires local councils to plan for older people's accommodation, allocate sites and support future development (The Scottish Government, 2014, paragraphs 132 to 133 ).

Other references to the importance of planning for, and responding to the housing needs for older people can be found in the *Department of Health Social Care White paper **Caring for our Future: reforming care and support*** (H.M. Government, July 2012), and more recently, the **Greater London Authority – London Plan – Further Alterations** (adopted March 2015) which notes that constraints in supply have meant that older Londoners cannot move into local specialist retirement housing, and that future demand for this type of housing will be over 4,000 units by 2025<sup>15</sup>.

There are also examples where a strategic approach has been taken by **local authorities** to plan ahead, for example Birmingham City Council's Planning for Later Life Housing Strategy (Birmingham City Council, n.d.) and Kent County Council's Accommodation Strategy, Better Homes: Greater Choice (Kent County Council, 2014).

### **3. How can the Welsh Government best achieve the aim of ensuring that older people have access to housing and related services that supports their needs and promotes independence by 2023?**

**A. By recognising that independent living is influenced by the spatial environment outside the home**, for example by promoting the practice of "**age-friendly cities and communities**" (World Health Organisation (WHO)) through improved access to transport, mobility in public spaces, and community infrastructures such as availability of public toilets, and safe pavements, etc. This requires cross-sector/agency working to ensure coordination of environmental design with service provisions, and pro-active engagement with older citizens and their carers who can act as key informants about the barriers and challenges they face in using public spaces. The WHO criteria could be linked to the *Ageing Well in Wales* initiative (Ageing Well in Wales Alliance, 2014) and in particular, its age-friendly communities initiatives.

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<sup>15</sup> London.Gov.UK. The London Plan. <http://www.london.gov.uk/priorities/planning/london-plan/>

**B. By facilitating involvement of older people and members of their support networks in design and delivery of housing and related services.**

In line with Wales' personalisation of care agenda and localism initiatives, create opportunities for older citizens and members of their support networks to identify what they experience as barriers to independence in the home and community environments, and what solutions they think are needed to support their health and wellbeing. The Housing LIN has a dedicated webpage on examples of practice and methods for involving and co-producing services for older people<sup>16</sup>.

**Issue/challenge:** ensure older people are represented on planning committees; this could mean working through existing local-level infrastructures like Wales' Older People's champions initiative (Welsh Assembly Government, May 2009).

**C. By ensuring flexible and person-centred service delivery and housing options.**

Older people's needs are likely to change over the latter part of the life course (e.g. end of life care at home and bereavement in the community) (National Council for Palliative Care, 2012). To respond effectively will mean facilitating **options for relocation** to more supportive housing environments, maintaining provision of **public investment in grants for "staying put" services, housing adaptations and maintenance**, and encouraging integrated and coordinated provision of *health, social care, housing and third sector services*.

**D. By increasing information, awareness and training about housing and service options.**

*Increasing public knowledge and awareness* of housing with support options and independent living options through publicity campaigns and targeted services could encourage older people to be more pro-active rather than re-active responses to changing housing and care needs.

**E. By training staff across housing, health, social care and third sectors** in enablement and personalisation of service delivery to help facilitate client independence and choice.

**F. By planning ahead for workforce requirements.** An increasing demand for trained specialist and appropriately remunerated workforce to support older people living at home will occur as the population continues to age, notably amongst the oldest old.

**G. By supporting local-level social enterprise and innovation initiatives** to develop **new products** which facilitate personal planning for later life housing, relocation and social care needs (e.g. equity release; insurance).

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<sup>16</sup> <http://www.housinglin.org.uk/Topics?browse?HousingOlderPeople/UserInvolvement/>

**H. By facilitating housing with support through access to new technologies: ambient assisted living technologies**<sup>17</sup> and **access to ICT** (e.g. good broadband) can help older people to maintain activities of daily living, and social networks, and facilitate delivery of health care services (e.g. telecare<sup>18</sup>), particularly in more remote areas. This means ensuring reliable and extensive broadband connections across Wales, particularly amongst older people, and continuing to support initiatives such as the Communities 2.0 digital inclusion project (Welsh Government, n.d.). There are some interesting and innovative European examples where new technologies are being used to facilitate digital inclusion in social housing contexts which have evolved as part of the European Union's Ambient Assisted Living Programme<sup>19</sup>.

#### **4. What choices does the Welsh housing market currently offer older people?**

**A. There are a variety of types of housing options for older people in Wales, but they are in short supply.** As previously noted the supply of mainstream and specialist housing stock is very limited. Recent estimates identify approximately 27,000 dwellings and 860 schemes of supported housing for older people, mainly 'sheltered', usually social rented, and a smaller proportion of private retirement housing, mainly owner-occupied (Pannell, & Blood, 2012: 8). The Housing LIN provides similar figures for the number of sheltered and extra-care units of accommodation for social rented stock<sup>20</sup>.

There are a small number of **specialist schemes for purchase** in the private sector (e.g. McCarthy and Stone), in addition to housing with care schemes<sup>21</sup> such as **extra-care** and **sheltered housing** models (offered primarily through the social rented sector in Wales), but which vary in terms of quality, and the more intensive **residential/nursing home** provisions. There is very limited **specialist accommodation for those with dementia**,

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<sup>17</sup> Active Assisted Living Programme at <http://www.aal-europe.eu/>

<sup>18</sup>NHS Wales. Health in Wales online bulletin at <http://www.wales.nhs.uk/news/32201>

<sup>19</sup>See for example: HOST (which worked with groups of Older people (via housing providers) in England, France, Italy and Spain to develop a user-friendly interface on tablet technology so people could access social networks, speak to each other via Skype, access a wide range of other local services (from prescription re-ordering to reporting repairs). <http://www.host-aal.eu/cms>; See also ALICE (which integrates ICT based services into existing TV sets using a set top box to allow older people who do not have computers/ broadband to communicate with family/ friends and interact socially) [www.aal-alice.eu](http://www.aal-alice.eu).

<sup>20</sup> Housing LIN England. Available from: [www.housinglin.org.uk/\\_library/Resources/Housing/Regions/Wales/OSH\\_and\\_ECH\\_in\\_Wales\\_by\\_LA\\_2014.pdf](http://www.housinglin.org.uk/_library/Resources/Housing/Regions/Wales/OSH_and_ECH_in_Wales_by_LA_2014.pdf). Accessed 18<sup>th</sup> June 2015.

<sup>21</sup> See the Elderly Accommodation Counsel's website about the various schemes in Wales at <http://www.housinglin.org.uk/HousingRegions/Wales/Housing-with-Care-Scheme-locator/>

but some recent initiatives in Wales can offer “good practice “benchmarks<sup>22</sup> , along with evidence of what works well by the Housing and Dementia Research Consortium hosted by the University of Worcester<sup>23</sup>. The newly established Welsh *Centre for Ageing and Dementia Research*, Swansea University, will also have a stream of work on age friendly and dementia supportive communities.

Alternatively, older people will ***stay in their own homes*** (as tenants or owners) with or without support services and appropriate adaptations to their living environments. ***Co-operative housing*** and ***co-housing*** initiatives are developing, primarily through grass-roots initiatives, but they do not necessarily incorporate housing with care or age-friendly features.

**B. There needs to be a more forward-looking approach to the design and planning of housing** underpinned by “future proofing” principles (not *having* to move because of housing design and support service constraints or costs), and which helps to change (rebrand) negative perceptions about older people’s housing. “Future proofing” can reflect design concepts such as “continuum of care” or “integrated living solutions” which underpin more eco-sustainable, community-integrated and age-friendly housing models. Examples of these do exist in other countries experiencing population ageing (see Housing LIN above and Farrelly, L. (ed). 2014 for some existing examples).

**C. Choices will be limited if people are not aware of their options** so there is a need for ***more information*** and understanding about the housing choices available to them, particularly with regard to benefits advice for low-income groups of older people.

**D. There is limited choice of leasehold, mixed-tenure or shared-ownership models or equity release products** to increase options and cover costs of housing (with or without support) in Wales. Some evidence suggests that the lack of ***leasehold options*** in specialist older people’s accommodation in Wales is limited compared to England (Pannell & Blood, 2012), and that some providers do not readily acknowledge the advantages of ***shared-ownership models*** as alternative funding mechanisms, either for the RSL or

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<sup>22</sup> See for example extra-care housing and dementia provisions in Mold, Flintshire at [http://www.housinglin.org.uk/\\_library/Resources/Housing/Practice\\_examples/Housing\\_LIN\\_case\\_studies/HLIN\\_CaseStudy\\_86\\_Mold.pdf](http://www.housinglin.org.uk/_library/Resources/Housing/Practice_examples/Housing_LIN_case_studies/HLIN_CaseStudy_86_Mold.pdf)

<sup>23</sup> <http://housingdementiaresearch.wordpress.com/>

owner-occupier sectors (op. cit.). The Housing LIN has extensive information on different funding models<sup>24</sup> and is writing a specific briefing on funding models in Wales.

**Equity release products** (Terry & Gibson, 2012; 2010) could be developed further, but may be limited as a means of increasing financial options for older people to fund their housing and care needs for those in regions where house prices are low; and may lead to increasing inequalities in terms of quality of housing and care choices (e.g. South Wales Valleys as one of Britain's lowest house price areas) (Kelly & Stirling, 2011).

**Recommendation:** review existing leasehold, shared-ownership, mixed-tenure models and equity release products (e.g. partnership options recently developed by Care & Repair) as options for reducing or covering housing (with support) costs for older people living on low incomes or "equity rich but cash poor" groups.

**Recommendation:** engage more with private rental sector to explore housing options for older people living on low incomes.

## 5. What is currently being done by housing providers - developers, local authorities, housing associations etc. - and the voluntary sector to address the challenge?

### **A. Strategic initiatives underway to increase supply and options include:**

- Care & Repair Cymru are currently looking at **equity release** products as a way of funding housing adaptations and improvements;
- **a planned expansion of extra-care schemes** with Welsh Government commitment to supporting the development of at least one new scheme for each of the 22 Local Authorities through the RSL sector, using the Housing Finance Grant<sup>25</sup>, scheme; as part of a drive to increase the construction of 1,000 affordable homes across Wales;
- As part of her *2013-17 Framework for Action (n.d.)*, **Wales' Older People's Commissioner** has outlined her intentions to "work in partnership with others to set the benchmark for the quality of residential care within Wales, ensuring the action needed to deliver this is taken by public services" (p. 13);

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<sup>24</sup> <http://www.housinglin.org.uk/Topics/browse/HousingExtraCare/FundingExtraCareHousing/>

<sup>25</sup> Welsh Government <http://gov.wales/topics/housing-and-regeneration/grants-and-funding/housing-finance-grant/?lang=en>



- The Older People’s Commissioner and CHC have had an initial meeting in April 2015 to discuss future RSL investments in residential/nursing home care; a report was also published recently on the quality of care in residential settings in Wales (Older People’s Commissioner, n.d.);
- **McCarthy & Stone has made a representation to the Welsh Government** regarding the need for a more strategic approach to local development plans to ensure inclusion of older people’s housing needs (Thomas, 2014);
- A **review of housing adaptation** services has recently been completed by Welsh Government who are currently considering implementation of the recommendations (Welsh Government, March 2015 and Minister’s Statement<sup>26</sup>);
- The **Housing LIN** is to publish a briefing on funding models in Wales.

**B. Tools to monitor housing demand:** the Housing LIN is currently developing a free, online analysis tool SHOP@<sup>27</sup> to assist councils, providers and funders in Wales to ascertain demand for purpose-built housing for older people by local authority area. It is currently being trialled in Gwent.

**C. “Staying put”, hospital discharge and “moving on” initiatives:** Care & Repair Cymru through its networks of agencies continues to provide information, advice and practical support for those **“staying put”** in their own homes (e.g. housing adaptations and modifications, safety checks, rapid response adaptations, etc.); they also facilitate hospital discharge through a **“Hospital to Home”** programme through its Conwy/Denbighshire, Bridgend, Carmarthenshire, Ceredigion/Pembrokeshire and RCT/Merthyr agencies. More recent initiatives include the development of a **“moving on”** service in Gwynedd/Ynys Mon Care & Repair Agency which has been successfully piloted with funding from the Intermediate Care Fund (Hillcoat-Nallétamby & Sardani, 2015).

**Independent living initiatives:** although not on a large scale, there are several initiatives from different providers across Wales<sup>28,29</sup>, for example Bron Afon where the **social housing**

<sup>26</sup> <http://www.assembly.wales/en/bus-home/pages/rop.aspx?meetingid=3105&language=en&assembly=4&c=Record%20of%20Proceedings&startDt=03/02/2015&endDt=03/02/2015#198131>

<sup>27</sup> English Housing LIN: SHOP@ [http://www.housinglin.org.uk/Topics/browse/HousingExtraCare/ExtraCareStrategy/SHOP/SHOPAT/WWhatisSHOPAT/](http://www.housinglin.org.uk/Topics/browse/HousingExtraCare/ExtraCareStrategy/SHOP/SHOPAT/WhatisSHOPAT/)

<sup>28</sup> Wales and West Housing at <http://www.wwha.co.uk/About-Us/Our%20Services%20for%20Older%20People/Pages/default.aspx>

<sup>29</sup><http://www.derwencymru.co.uk/>

**stock** has been transformed (both infrastructure and support<sup>30</sup>); and Cartrefi Conwy in Llandudno where **sheltered housing is being remodelled** in line with Welsh Quality Housing Standards<sup>31</sup>. Bron Afon also use a small number of flats in sheltered housing to enable older people to leave hospital and receive rehabilitation before they return home

Several **co-housing**<sup>32</sup> Initiatives are emerging in Wales, although they are not generally designed as housing with care settings, and may not be feasible or sustainable for those older people living on low incomes. **Co-operative housing** initiatives are also emerging across Wales; these are now supported through the **Housing (Wales) Act 2014**<sup>33</sup>, where schemes are developing with housing associations and local authorities, and funding from WG, with support from the Wales Co-operative Centre and Confederation of Co-operative Housing.

The **Supporting People Programme Grant** also provides support for independent living services across Wales including accommodation and non-accommodation based support (e.g. alarm services primarily in extra-care or sheltered housing) (Welsh Government, March 2015).

**Recommendation:** develop “good practice” benchmark model of housing with care based on appraisal of existing initiatives in Wales (“what works” exercise in housing with care design);

**Recommendation:** maintain public investments which support services to help older people across all tenures to “stay put” or “move on”.

## 6. What housing options are currently available or could be developed in future for older people on low incomes?

A. **Means-tested allocation of extra-care and social rented housing:** these existing options only provide for a minority group of older people in Wales (about 9% of those aged 65+ in Wales in 2011 in social rented sector); however, with longer-term reductions in public capital investment in these housing options, it is likely that increasing numbers of low-income older people will be disadvantaged.

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<sup>30</sup>Derwen at <https://www.bronafon.org.uk/>

<sup>31</sup>Conwy at <http://www.cartreficonwy.org/cartrefi/page/whqs>

<sup>32</sup> UK Co-Housing Network at <http://www.cohousing.org.uk/groups>

<sup>33</sup> Welsh Government. Housing (Wales) Act 2014 update at <http://gov.wales/topics/housing-and-regeneration/legislation/housing-act/?lang=en>

- B. New initiatives to increase options: facilitating relocation options** through publicly subsidised “moving on” schemes which can crystallise downsizing plans, and free up personal equity and local housing stock.
- C. Increasing access to information and advice** about pro-active planning for “staying put” and “moving on” options, targeting older people on low incomes who have limited options; using existing “community hubs” such as libraries, community centres, local media as dissemination points; or existing service infrastructures and client bases’ (e.g. Supporting People; Care & Repair Cymru).
- D. Reducing costs of housing development:** through **high density developments (e.g. brown-field sites)** of smaller units within close proximity of established urban/community infrastructures.
- E. Look for innovative funding models:** combine housing with care services and operate on a “pay by results” model (e.g. reduced hospital admissions or nursing home bed requirements) using innovative social impact investment<sup>34</sup> (OECD, 2015; Ragin & Palandjian, 2013; Stirling, April 2011).
- F. Invest in eco-sustainable building:** facilitate inclusion of **sustainable environmental design** features in new build (e.g. building to high sustainable energy/low carbon specifications) to ensure high quality thermal comfort at low energy running costs for those on low incomes (e.g. see work undertaken by Dundalk’s “Centre for Excellence Design”). This will ultimately contribute to reducing risks of fuel poverty and health-related problems and contribute to overall goals of environmental sustainability. A good example of this is the **LILAC** project in Leeds – Low Impact Affordable Living Community, an affordable, ecological co-housing project<sup>35</sup>.

**Recommendation:** convene a Welsh Government cross-department working group to promote “future proofed” housing.

- G. Increase public investments for housing and care costs for low income households in the private sector:** increase grant rate allocations to reduce costs of intensive housing with care options, retrofit, adaptations and maintenance for low income older people and their families; this can be a preventive measure in reducing the likelihood of hospitalisation, residential/nursing home admission, declining health and autonomy, and maintaining quality of housing stock.

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<sup>34</sup> See for example Ireland’s Clann Credo initiative at <http://www.clanncredo.ie/default.aspx?m=1&mi=41>.

<sup>35</sup> <http://www.lilac.coop/>

H. **Explore the potential for expanding housing options through the private rental sector:** some recent evidence indicates that there is scope to explore the private rental sector as an alternative housing option for older people (Pannell & Blood, Feb, 2014a; 2014b).

I. **Support community-led service initiatives for independent or inter-dependent living.** Help to sustain (e.g. public investments to complement volunteer investments; training opportunities) existing community-led, housing-related service and support network initiatives which enable community members to support each other to remain at home. For example, community co-ordinator schemes such as *Circle* involves older people and others in reciprocal exchanges of support<sup>36</sup>; the *Key ring network* initially designed for people with learning disabilities which links people living in close geographic proximity (e.g. neighbourhood) who support each other in various ways<sup>37</sup>. A good international example of this is the example of *Cúltaca*, a service broker initiative as part of the Nestling Project underway in Dundalk's Netwell Centre<sup>38</sup>.

**Recommendation:** use public investments to support existing or new community co-ordinator schemes including all tenure types.

G. **Recognise the need for provisions for low-middle income groups:** target individuals who are just above benefits levels and who are not helped through grant schemes, but do not have much in the way of assets.

H. **Complete a scoping study of existing or planned intentional communities in Wales** as potential solutions to ***low-cost, affordable and sustainable housing and community living*** solutions. These new social initiatives are often referred to as “intentional communities”<sup>39</sup> or collective living environments – *CLEM* (Huber, 2008) and include the eco-village, the thematic tourist village, co-housing and co-operative housing models. *CLEM* can be confined to a specific group of people living collectively<sup>40</sup> within a spatially-defined community or locality (e.g. a purpose-built, co-housing unit in a village or town), or can span more widely to include inhabitants of a small village or community-level initiative (e.g. the eco-village or thematic village). Whilst some of these are highly localised

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<sup>36</sup> <http://www.circlecentral.com/>

<sup>37</sup> <http://www.keyring.org/Home>

<sup>38</sup> For a full evaluation of this initiative, contact Rodd Bond at <http://www.netwellcentre.org/nestling-project.html>

<sup>39</sup> <http://www.ecovillageroad.eu/user/127>; <http://www.dorf-stadterneuerung.at/content.php?pageld=6489>; <http://www.cohousing.org.uk>; <http://www.cch.coop/coopinfo/intro.html>

<sup>40</sup> “Collective living” encompasses different approaches to sharing living space and communal resources.

initiatives, others have formed as more coordinated networks at the national, European or global scale (e.g. Global Village Network<sup>41</sup>; Global Village Network Europe, Asia and Pacific; Eco-Village; International Co-operative Alliance Housing; UK<sup>42</sup>; Italy<sup>43</sup>; France<sup>44</sup>). CLEM initiatives are generally underpinned by a broad commitment to social inclusion, promoting carbon-neutral living and environmental sustainability, and in “practical solutions” terms, by some dimension of collective, collaborative management and organisation, and co-living arrangements at the community group level. The co-housing and eco-village models generally integrate sustainable construction principles, including regeneration of brownfield sites, use of renewable energy sources<sup>45</sup>, as well as some dimension of innovative service or goods provision (e.g. eco-villages produce high quality locally grown food through permaculture methods; co-housing structures often facilitate reduced energy consumption through shared arrangements such as car-pooling, food growing, etc. and offer social activities through outreach initiatives such as community café hubs or shops).

Although many involve intergenerational living (such as Springhill in Stroud), the impetus for such models has often come from older people who themselves have taken on the role – albeit unintentionally - of “silver entrepreneur” (Allen, Hillcoat-Nallétamby & Phillips, 2014; Botham & Graves, 2009). For community development, CLEM can be aligned with initiatives designed to improve community cohesion, encourage citizen-led development (in England for example, the drive to facilitate localism (DCLG, Nov. 2011) and decision-making at the local level.

To date, although expanding in number across Europe and beyond, and recognised for their potential in providing new housing solutions in a context of population ageing (CDS Cooperatives, 2012), CLEM have not been developed on any large scale in Wales, and have not been fully assessed for their use as providing “future proofed”/age-sustainable” housing options. They nonetheless potentially offer a model for **reduced housing and care costs for individuals, and “housing with support” environments** if adapted to lifetime home and “age-friendly” community specifications.

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<sup>41</sup><http://gen.ecovillage.org/>; <http://www.gen-europe.org/> ;  
[http://eu.baltic.net/Project\\_Database.5308.html?&&contentid=51&contentaction=single](http://eu.baltic.net/Project_Database.5308.html?&&contentid=51&contentaction=single) ;  
<http://www.icahousing.coop/>

<sup>42</sup><http://www.cohousing.org.uk/networkabout>

<sup>43</sup> <http://cohousing.it/>

<sup>44</sup> <http://www.habitatgroupe.org/>

<sup>45</sup><http://www.greenbuildnews.co.uk/news-details/Plans-for-Scottish-eco-village/462>

**Recommendation:** undertake scoping study of existing or planned “intentional communities” in Wales and UK as basis for increasing housing options for vulnerable older adults, including low-income groups.

## Section 2: Initial Conclusions and Preliminary Recommendations

Planning for current and future demands for housing adapted to the needs of an ageing population is important because of:

- significant variations in people’s personal social and financial resources which are the mainstays for positive and active ageing, and which influence our ability to make choices about housing;
- a propensity for older people to live in rural areas where it is difficult for them to access services;
- cultural norms which mean that specialist housing with care is often still viewed with caution and scepticism;
- where the value placed on home ownership, and sentimental attachment to “staying put”, even when this poses challenges for retrofit and costs of maintenance, means that it will be challenging to convince older people that moving on to more suitable accommodation may be a good option;
- for these reasons it will also be challenging to mainstream different products such as equity release, moving on services, or shared-ownership schemes which potentially address the needs of low-income or socially vulnerable, older groups.

These challenges notwithstanding, there are pockets of change and innovation across Wales and beyond which indicate that older people, if armed with knowledge, information, advice and practical support will be prepared to change. The emphasis therefore shifts from understanding the barriers and challenges of catering for older people’s housing preferences, to the broader level of what is actually out there – the questions of quality of services and mainstreaming of affordable and suitably designed housing stock which older people can then choose from. The macro-level question is therefore one of how to increase housing supply, suitably adapted to later life requirements.

The expert workshop highlighted problems and challenges associated with designing, funding and mainstreaming housing options which cater to requirements for “staying put” or “moving on”. These come down to the following broad themes:

- **the need to mainstream housing for an ageing population** into all aspects of current and forward-looking policies and strategic frameworks at national and local levels - in housing, sustainable community development, planning, technology, energy, health and social care, poverty;
- recognising as a national priority, the need for **focused and long-term planning for housing**, including robust approaches to **assessing housing demand and need** at local levels in Wales, notably in more remote rural contexts; and aligning this with the population needs assessments to take place under the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act;
- recognising that housing is more than just “bricks and mortar” and requires an holistic approach which **integrates sustainable homes in sustainable communities**;
- acknowledging the need for **public investment** to incentivise planners, financial services, the construction industry, housing, health and social care service providers and individual consumers – so that they will take on board the challenges of providing and using good quality, age-sustainable and affordable housing, in rural and urbanised contexts;
- **facilitating cross-sector/service/departmental working** in housing, social care and health to maximise efficiencies and deliver on personalised service provisions;
- making **information, advice, practical support and training** available to all stakeholders for purposes of making links between housing, independent living and socio-economic wellbeing, raising awareness about housing and funding options; and encouraging planning for later life housing and care needs;
- draw on both **Welsh and international “good practice” examples** to create a Welsh “Quality Kite Mark” for housing with care design and service developments;
- recognise the role for innovation in housing design and funding mechanisms to ensure housing stock is adapted to future needs for affordability and sustainability;
- **facilitating stakeholder consultation and engagement** in the design and running of housing projects.

Based on the expert workshop discussion, Table 1 outlines initial agreement on the key preliminary recommendations about housing for older people in Wales in the context of population ageing. Given the timeframe set out by the Minister for what can be achieved by 2023, priority areas and recommendations are set out according to short (within next 12 months), medium term (over next 36 months) and longer term (until 2023). The Preliminary

Recommendations outlined below have been developed with a view to consideration and implementation by the Welsh Government.

Table 1: Preliminary Recommendations to the Welsh Government

	<b>Preliminary Recommendation</b>	<b>Timeline</b>
1	That the Minister convene a cross-sector/stakeholder group, tasked with developing a <i>housing strategy to address older people's current and future housing requirements</i> , in response to population ageing, and in line with sustainable community development and independent living agendas	short
2	That the Minister set up a cross-departmental Welsh Government working group to identify a <i>long-term vision</i> for promoting the supply of affordable, "future-proofed" and "age-sustainable" housing for future generations	medium
3	That the Minister call for a <i>review of Planning Policy Wales</i> within the framework of Local Development Plan and local planning policies, to ensure integration of a strategic planning approach which addresses older people's housing needs, particularly in rural settings	short
4	That all Local Authorities be required to develop <i>population-based housing needs assessments</i> , using existing Local Authority guidance and primary and/or secondary data sources, including age-based criteria (e.g. Housing LIN SHOP tool; census; National Survey for Wales)	short, medium and longer
5	That population-based research be commissioned <i>to identify suitable brown-field sites</i> for cost-benefit analysis and development purposes (notably in rural areas) and aiming to increase the supply of housing with care	medium
6	That a feasibility assessment be undertaken to <i>integrate lifetime home and accessibility standards/specifications</i> into Building Regulations for <i>private sector</i> housing stock	short
7	That a mapping exercise of existing "good practice" housing with care models in Wales be commissioned, to develop " <i>Quality Kite Mark</i> " benchmark housing design and service criteria (e.g. HAPPI criteria; OPERAT assessment tools)	medium
8	That the Minister set up a cabinet sub-committee on <i>health, housing and social care</i> to identify strategic approaches to integrated, cross-sector working and funding for housing with care and independent living	medium
9	That a <i>review of public investment and grant streams</i> be undertaken with the aim of supporting further investment in the supply of housing with care, independent living and home maintenance/retrofit/ adaptations services and products	medium and longer



10	That a review of <i>leasehold, shared-ownership and private-market rental models, and equity release products</i> be undertaken as a baseline for identifying Welsh housing (with care) funding options for all stakeholders	medium and longer
11	That public investment be maintained for existing and new good practice” and innovative, local-level services which: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• support older people in all tenures to <i>plan and make pro-active decisions</i> about their housing options (“moving on” or “staying put”), particularly low-income and/or rural groups;</li> <li>• <i>support vulnerable older citizens in their communities</i> to “stay put” by providing local community coordinators who facilitate community-led mutual support initiatives</li> </ul>	short, medium and longer
12	That agencies, organisations and research hubs be identified and commissioned to undertake action research to design an <i>education, training &amp; KI&amp;A package</i> about housing options and pro-active planning, particularly for older people in low-income groups	medium and longer
13	That a scoping study of <i>collective living environment/intentional community models</i> in Wales be commissioned as a basis for increasing the future supply of affordable and sustainable housing options, particularly for older people in low-income groups	medium
14	That, if feasible, Wales be integrated into the existing <i>English Housing LIN</i> by 2016.	short

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# Appendix 1: List of participants who attended the PPIW Expert Workshop: Meeting the needs of an ageing population in Wales, Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> June 2015

**Dr Sarah Hillcoat-Nallétamby** (Chair) - Centre for Innovative Ageing, Swansea University

**Dr James Ogg** - Head of the Social Science-Ageing Research Unit, Caisse Nationale d'Assurance Vieillesse, Paris

**Christine Bentham** - Director of Care in Housing Consultancy; representing Jeremy Porteus, Director of the Housing LIN (Learning and Improvement Network)

**Dr Roderick Bond** - Director of the Netwell Centre, Dundalk Institute of Technology, Ireland

**Gary Day** - Director of Land and Planning, McCarthy & Stone Retirement Lifestyles Ltd, UK

**Imogen Blood** - Imogen Blood Associates; representing the JRF

**Tamsin Stirling** - Tamsin Stirling Associates.

**Ian Williams** - Group Chief Executive, Hendre Housing Association

**Chris Jones** - Chief Executive, Care & Repair Cymru

**Catherine Evans O'Brien** - Older People's Commission for Wales

**John Howells** - Senior Official, Welsh Government

**Professor Steve Martin** - Director, PPIW

**Robert Ford** - Administrator, PPIW

**Lauren Carter-Davies** - Research Officer, PPIW

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