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**CROSS-PARTY GROUP CALLS FOR URGENT ACTION TO MAKE HOUSING ‘DEMENTIA-READY’**

A cross-party group of MPs and Peers has called for urgent action to ensure that housing is ‘dementia-ready’ from the outset.

A report from the All-Party Parliament Group (APPG) on Housing and Care for Older People, *Housing for people with dementia – are we ready?,* has found that progress in developing suitable homes for those living with the dementia has been too slow. The APPG warned that, unless this issue was addressed, increasing numbers of people in the UK’s ageing society will be unable to find housing which supports their needs

Far from being a future problem, the report by the Housing LIN highlights how the majority of those already living with dementia in the UK do not live in purpose-designed housing and an increasing number live alone without access to formal care.

The Inquiry gathered evidence from a wide range of contributions from older people living with dementia, organisations within the housing and care sectors and government departments; hearing how “every decision about care is a decision about housing” and making a series of recommendations which include:

* People should consider potential future loneliness and how we can maintain our family connections and wider social networks in the communities we live in before or after a diagnosis of dementia.
* The Cabinet Office brings together the Department for Health and Social Care (DHSC) with NHS England, the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) and HM Treasury to forge an overarching strategy for housing and care for older people.
* DHSC recognise the interdependency between housing, social care and the NHS in supporting people with dementia and correspondingly rethink funding to prevent the need for higher-cost services.
* MHCLG support increased provision of Extra Care Housing/ Assisted Living accommodation and retirement housing that is dementia-ready, with top-sliced grant-aid through Homes England and the GLA Affordable Housing Programme.
* Housing providers consider the design and adaptability of their homes in meeting the needs of those living with dementia, covering both ‘hard design’ and ‘soft design’, adopting the new ‘dementia-ready’ HAPPI design principles.
* Plans set out by local authorities should also take account of and act on the demand and need for housing for people living with dementia among BAME and LGBT communities in their locality.

Co-Chair of the APPG on Housing and Care for Older People, Lord Best, said:

“*There are no vaccines for dementia. There is currently no cure, and in most cases the condition worsens over time. But getting the housing right can make a huge difference for those living with dementia and their carers’.*

*Our Inquiry shows how ‘right-sizing’ or adapting the home can avoid or postpone a move into residential care, saving residential places for others who really need them.*

*Our recommendations challenge politicians and practitioners but also ourselves to get ready for a future when, despite increasing numbers, everyone with dementia can have a fulfilling life*.”

Jane Ashcroft CBE, Chief Executive of Anchor Hanover, which sponsored the inquiry, said:

“*At Anchor Hanover, we understand the importance of high-quality housing to the lives of older people – particularly for those living with dementia.*

*This report highlights the massive improvements which can be made to people’s lives by housing which enables individuals to be more independent.*

*The recommendations set out clear and effective ways in which the government and providers can address this major challenge, making our society more dementia-friendly and enhancing the lives of those living with dementia.”*

Jeremy Porteus, Secretariat to the Inquiry and co-author of the report added:

*“It is over a decade since the publication of the first HAPPI report. At that time, it highlighted the need for ‘care ready’ design for housing our ageing population.*

*This Inquiry has gone much further and completely reframed the original 10 principles to incorporate for dementia-readiness. Good design is good dementia design. So, let’s not wait another ten years - let’s adopt HAPPI now.”*

– ENDS –

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**Notes to Editors:**

**About Anchor Hanover:**

Anchor Hanover is England’s largest not-for-profit provider of care and housing for people in later life, with more than 60,000 customers in 54,000 homes across almost 1,700 locations, supported by more than 10,000 colleagues. Anchor Hanover provides retirement housing to rent and to buy, retirement villages and residential care homes, including specialist dementia care, operating in more than 85% of local councils in England. For more information visit [www.anchorhanover.org.uk](http://www.anchorhanover.org.uk)

**About the Housing LIN**

The Housing LIN is a sophisticated network that brings together policy makers and practitioners to champion better quality housing and health and care services for an ageing population. To access a range of other resources on housing and dementia curated by the Housing LIN, visit: <https://www.housinglin.org.uk/HousingandDementia/>

Copies of *Housing for people with dementia – are we ready?* can be downloaded from the dedicated APPG Inquiry webpage on the Housing LIN’s housing and dementia webpages at: <https://www.housinglin.org.uk/APPG-Housing-and-Dementia>