



## **A Submission by the Housing Learning and Improvement Network (LIN) to the All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) on Older People's inquiry into on decent and accessible housing for older people.**

11 February 2019

We are pleased to submit a response to this APPG on Older People's inquiry on decent and accessible housing for older people.

### **About the Housing LIN**

The Housing LIN is a sophisticated peer-to-peer network bringing together housing, health and social care professionals to exemplify innovative housing solutions for an ageing population, and to meet the needs and aspirations of disabled people, of all ages. It is a signatory of the pioneering Health and Housing Memorandum of Understanding.

The Housing LIN is recognised by industry as the sector leading 'knowledge hub' on specialist housing. Its founder and Chief Executive is also the author of several of the HAPPI reports referred to in our submission. Furthermore, the Housing LIN's online and regional networked activities:

- Connect people, ideas and resources to inform and improve the range of housing choices that enable older and disabled people to live Independently
- Share thought-leadership, learning and intelligence on latest funding, research, policy and innovate developments to spread practice faster
- Engage with industry to raise the profile of specialist housing with developers, commissioners and providers to plan, design and deliver aspirational housing for an ageing population, and for people with physical and learning disabilities

For more information on the work of the Housing LIN, visit:

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

### **Consultation response**

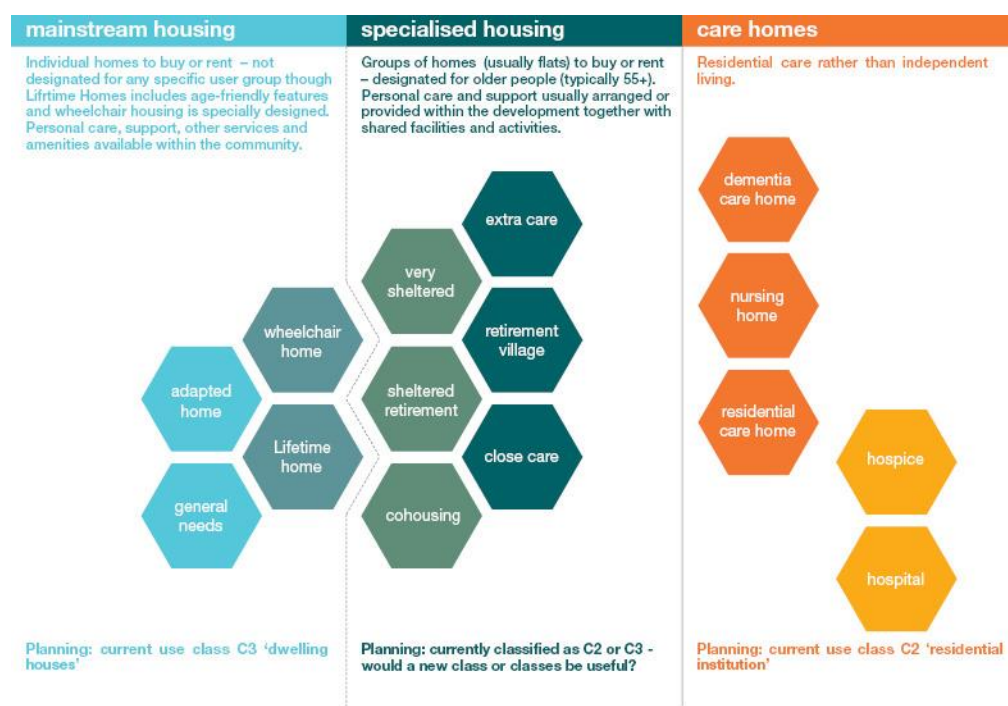
This submission specifically addresses the APPG session on 11 February 2019; namely, '*review of the reasons for the variations in the quality and conditions in supported housing for older people*'.

*"It's not just about the variations of quality in supported housing, we have underlying inequality in the access to and availability of independent housing for those with care and support needs".*

Jeremy Porteus, Housing LIN and co-author of Age-Friendly Housing, RIBA 2018

In reviewing the reasons for variations in the quality and conditions in supported housing for older people, it may be useful to consider the variations found in supported housing that also occur in other forms of housing. Identifying variations that span across housing types may lead to a comprehensive evaluation and improvement strategy that raises the level of access to and availability of a range of housing choices for older people with care and support needs.

Fig. 1 – HAPPI Housing Types



The range of current age-friendly housing options identified in the [HAPPI design report](#) (shown above in Figure 1) can be differentiated as mainstream housing, specialised housing, or care homes. What transcends these categories is the benefit of inclusive design and the HAPPI design principles, whether it is general needs housing or supported residential care. Likewise, the lack of such standard is a potential cause of poor quality across all housing types.

When considering the reasons for supported housing variations in quality, reflecting on the [HAPPI design principles](#) championed by the APPG on Housing and Care for Older People and raising several points stated at the 16 January 2019 APPG session are relevant to support our approach to this submission. Namely, Melanie Onn MP, Shadow Minister for Housing, reinforced the need to address supported housing as part of the inquiry by noting that the biggest section of supported housing is for older people. However, Rachael Docking, Senior Evidence Manager for the Centre for Ageing Better, noted that the inquiry should also take a broader view, since the majority of older people actually live in mainstream housing. Moreover, we know a third of people over 85 live in a non-decent home and we also know that only 7% of homes meet the basic accessibility standards. Since

inaccessible homes make falls more likely, and cold, indecent homes lead to worse health outcomes, the public purse loses £624 million a year.<sup>1</sup>

#### *Inclusive Design Opportunity*

Also during the 16 January 2019 session, Melanie Onn stated that it is not only older people who would benefit from homes for life, and Cllr Ian Hudspeth, Leader of Oxfordshire County Council and Chair of the Local Government Association's Community Wellbeing Board, suggested that we should create more desirable homes by meeting people's wider aspirations for flexible homes which meet changing needs, regardless of their age.

With regard to this, the Housing LIN has observed how inclusive design policies in Japan have raised the standard of design across all sectors, not just specialised housing and products. The Japanese Inclusive Design Standards describe the beneficiaries in the following way:

*"People with the following needs also benefit greatly from accessible and inclusive environments:*

- *People with injuries such as sprains and fractures*
- *Older adults and seniors*
- *Pregnant women or people with infants*
- *Children*
- *People who speak languages other than Japanese*
- *People who have big, heavy luggage*
- *People who need to travel with a companion, service dog or the like accompany them for some reason*
- *First aid and emergency service personnel*

*Therefore a significant percentage of the population is a beneficiary of an accessible environment. More importantly, almost everybody will become a beneficiary of an accessible environment at some stage in their lives, as a result of the natural aging process and its accompanying reduction of sensory and physical functions."*<sup>2</sup>

With this in mind, we can envision how drawing on the HAPPI design principles could benefit people across all ages and abilities. The following diagram (Figure 2a) describes the cost of not thinking inclusively. The diagram shows how the lack of homes with the basic accessibility features is an environmental problem across all housing types. This impacts the health and wellbeing of all older people while also costing Local Authorities up to £35,568.<sup>3</sup>

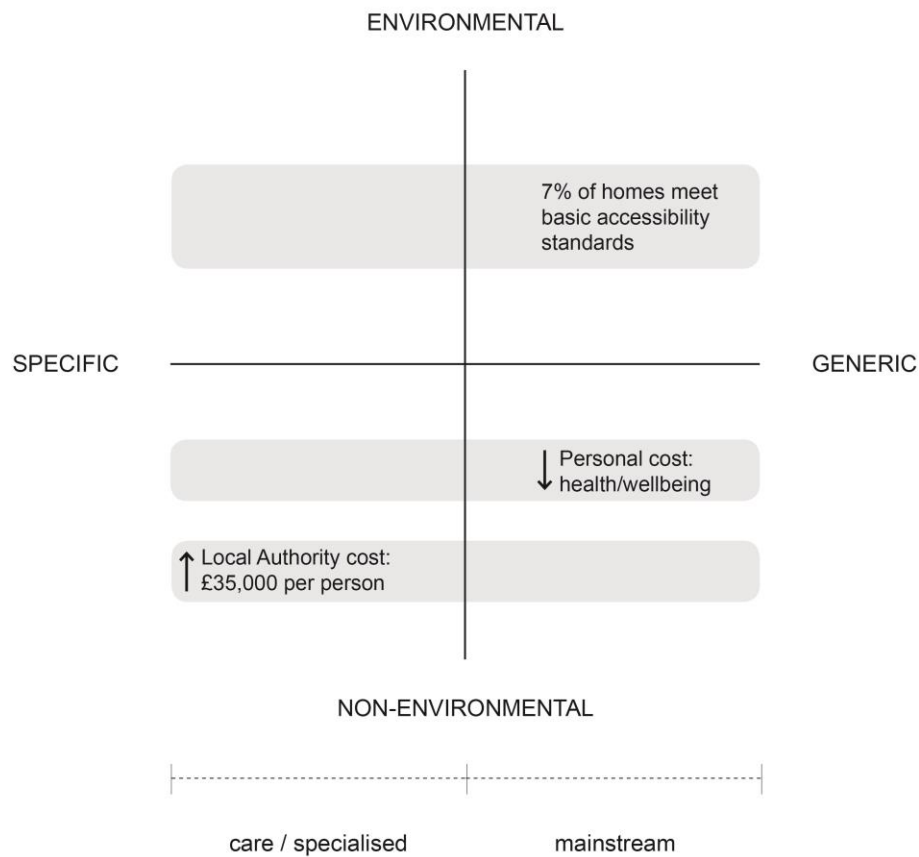
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<sup>1</sup> [https://www.bre.co.uk/filelibrary/Briefing%20papers/86749-BRE\\_briefing-paper-PHE-England-A4-v3.pdf](https://www.bre.co.uk/filelibrary/Briefing%20papers/86749-BRE_briefing-paper-PHE-England-A4-v3.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> [https://tokyo2020.org/en/organising-committee/accessibility/data/accessibility-guidelines\\_EN.pdf](https://tokyo2020.org/en/organising-committee/accessibility/data/accessibility-guidelines_EN.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> [https://www.housinglin.org.uk/assets/Resources/Housing/OtherOrganisation/Full\\_year\\_HOOP\\_evaluation\\_on\\_June\\_2016.pdf](https://www.housinglin.org.uk/assets/Resources/Housing/OtherOrganisation/Full_year_HOOP_evaluation_on_June_2016.pdf)

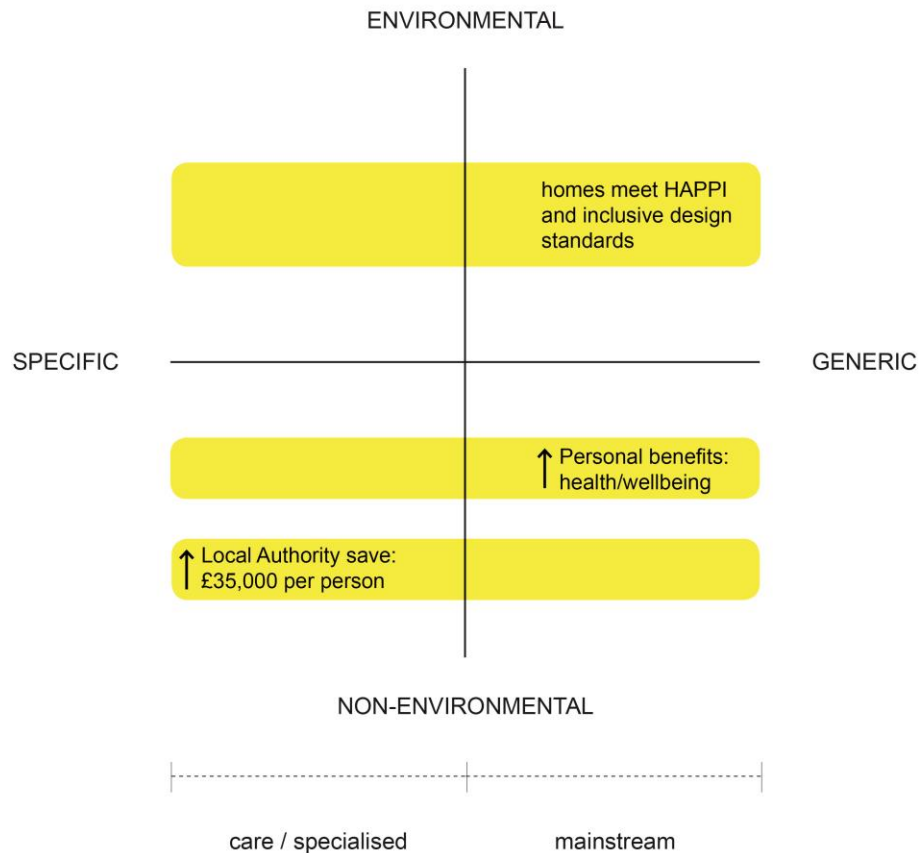
*Fig. 2a – Relationship between the built environment and personal and public costs due to lack of an accessible environment*



By designing inclusively, the environment can improve the health and wellbeing of all ages, specifically older people, and produce a saving to local authorities of £35,568 per older person per year, when compared to the cost of paying for residential care for those individuals (Figure 2b).<sup>4</sup>

*Fig. 2b – Relationship between the built environment and personal and public savings thanks to an accessible environment (below)*

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.housinglin.org.uk/Topics/type/Housing-Options-for-Older-People-The-HOOP/>



This diagram reveals not only that the home environment is directly tied to non-environmental impacts, but also that many of the variations of quality and condition in supported housing can be found across all housing types, and would benefit from an inclusive design approach that enforces standards such as Lifetime Homes and HAPPI.

### Reasons for variation

In terms of reasons for variations, we have focused on three areas:

- *Design principles (environmental variation)*
- *Capital investment (non-environmental variation)*
- *Guidance (non-environmental with the opportunity to enforce better environmental conditions)*

The [Equalities and Human Rights Commission](#) evaluated the availability of accessible and adaptable housing and the support services for disabled people, and identified some key recommendations for these three areas that we believe are relevant to this inquiry:

Design: *“There is a significant shortage of accessible homes - Building more accessible and adaptable homes and calling on government to introduce a national strategy that ensures there is an adequate supply of new home built to universal/inclusive design standards and wheelchair-accessible standards”*

Funding and capital investment: *“Disabled people are not getting the support that they need to live independently - Supporting people to live independently, including better integrated funding across housing, health and care and access to disability advice and advocacy services.”*

Guidance: *“Disabled people are too often demoralised and frustrated by the housing system - Matching homes to the people that need them, including embedding independent living principles into housing assessments & allocations as well improving knowledge and monitoring accessibility of housing via accessible housing registers”*

### *Design*

As we know, poor housing standards and a lack of alternatives or awareness of alternatives force older people into care sooner than necessary. To address this, inclusive design and standards such as Lifetime Homes and HAPPI can lead to a range of thoughtfully designed housing options and adaptations. If such accessible, high quality options were available, alongside a system of support to help people understand what those options are, we will increase the quality of housing for all and benefit the public purse.

It is important to not only focus on the accessibility and inclusive design of new build homes but also on the adaptability of our existing house stock. As Sue Adams OBE, Chief Executive of Care and Repair England, stated: 96% of people live in the existing housing stock and 87% of the homes people will live in by 2050 are there already. These statistics reinforce the need for the “Help to Stay” initiative that Jo Boaden raised.

In terms of design, the [Homes and ageing in England Briefing Paper created by Building Research Establishment \(BRE\) on behalf of Public Health England](#) found that 1/5 of people over 65 live in homes with none of the basic accessibility features (level access, flush threshold, WC at entrance level and sufficiently wide doors and circulation space), which reiterates how important adaptations are in addressing the variation in quality across all types of housing. The BRE Briefing Paper goes on to describe the cost-benefit analysis of the basic repairs, for example, by repairing flooring and space layouts to deter falls on the level, the repair costs will pay themselves back in 4.5 years because the NHS will save £34,700,172.

Not only new build homes can benefit from HAPPI and Lifetime Home principles. Adaptations can be taken one step further to address environmental health risks resulting from missing HAPPI principles, such as the negative health impact of institutional spaces that prohibit connection or lack of natural light. These criteria support people across all types of housing tenure and lead to positive health outcomes.

In terms of considerations specific to supported housing, the vulnerability of many people in supported housing and safeguarding can be an issue. How the dwelling and associated housing-related support ensures their wellbeing is an important consideration that should be considered in both the design standards and guidance.<sup>5</sup>

### *Funding and Capital investment*

Funding, or lack of, is often a cause for variation in quality and condition. There are various funding initiatives but the often siloed approach may make them difficult to access. The Housing LIN oversees an [online directory](#) of funded schemes in an effort to decrease this reason for variation. There are also a variety of new build funding schemes, such as CASSH funding, a specialist Department of Health and Care Services grant for supported housing (administered by Homes England and the GLA); funding administered through Homes England and GLA's Affordable Housing Programme; and inward private investment for 'exempt accommodation'. These initiatives support the need for more supported housing, which is critical, since without an increase in supply of supported housing, we can expect to see an increase in the provision of inappropriate placements in residential care due to lack of choice, and the associated cost to the public purse.

### *Guidance/Policy*

However, as reported by the [CLG Select Committee on Housing for Older People](#), there is a lack of clear government guidance on the importance of independent advice and information for older people to become aware of the housing options available to them. Not only do we need more housing options for older people, but we also need more information about those options across all tenure and dwelling types, and supported housing is no exception. As the Housing LIN recently tweeted, "*we need High Street 'care' banks that offer independent financial and housing advice to people to making informed decisions about their local housing choices*" (Tuesday, 22 January 2019).

We are also concerned that the disappointing change to make building regulations around Lifetime Homes optional will lead to a reduced standard of housing, resulting in a backlog of inaccessible homes, and delayed cost spent on the adaptations that will have to be made later.

Housing LIN supports Habinteg's for Accessible Homes campaign and are encouraged to see the London Plan has adopted Habinteg's recommended 90% of new homes built to the accessible, adaptable standard of M4(2) and 10% to the wheelchair standard of M4(3), but it is critical to expand this standard to a national level so homes outside of London have the same longevity as in the capital.

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<sup>5</sup> [http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2014/23/pdfs/ukpga\\_20140023\\_en.pdf](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2014/23/pdfs/ukpga_20140023_en.pdf)



While some view the M4(2) and M4(3) standards as a nearly equivalent revision of Lifetime Homes and Wheelchair Housing Design<sup>6</sup>, it is also important to consider that wheelchair accessibility impacts 6% of people and Lifetime Homes has the breadth to also consider the other 94%. Lifetime Homes also has the advantage of being a legible term that residents and built environment stakeholders alike can understand and learn to expect, rather than overly complicated, technical terminology that is inaccessible to many working in the field. Reinforcing Lifetime Homes through policy will enable the [5 Lifetime Homes principles](#) to positively impact new and existing homes across the U.K.

And on the planning front, we consider that the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) has poor information on supported housing for planning purposes for older and disabled people, and while there is long-awaited guidance from MHCLG, there is also an opportunity to leverage tools such as [SHOP@](#) (see below for further information), which can help local planners and commissioners shape decisions on the how, what and where to develop specialist housing for older people. And as being tested in Greater Manchester, the Elderly Accommodation Counsel's [HOOP tool](#) (see below for further information) provides clear information around the choices available, and therefore encourages more proactive moves rather than reactive moves which ultimately saves the public purse.

It is also worth noting, while we wait for the governments Adult Social Care Green Paper, that the 2014 Care act emphasised that housing is not just the 'bricks and mortar' but also includes housing related support or services. By providing support services such as SHOP@ for development and HOOP for resident advice, we can see how older people could become better aware of their choices. And if designed to a higher standard, we believe that there would be greater demand for better quality and more desirable homes that meet the needs or aspirations of an ageing population. Furthermore, adapting the Scottish Homes' Home Point checklist (Figure 3) could offer a route map for improved accountability and ultimately sustainability, ensuring that the HAPPI/Inclusive Design standards and the guidance provided such as HOOP and SHOP@ are maintained.

*Fig.3 – Scottish Homes' Home Point checklist (below)*

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<sup>6</sup> <https://www.habinteg.org.uk/foraccessiblehomes>



## HOUSING INFORMATION AND ADVICE STANDARDS

Subject : HOUSING OPTIONS - PUBLIC SECTOR.

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- Analysis :**
- Identify whether current home under threat.\*
  - Identify any rights to housing e.g. homelessness or Environmental Health action on existing property.
  - Identify if seeking rehousing or transfer.\*
  - Identify special needs.
  - Identify if registered on local housing lists and/or if other housing options are being pursued or are applicable.
- Information :**
- Written and verbal information about local authority housing list or transfer policies and procedures and how to register.
  - Information on any existing legal rights.
  - Information on any applicable special schemes operating locally e.g. special needs, hard-to-let schemes, key worker quotas etc..
  - Written and verbal information about housing benefit.\*
  - Information on likely waiting times.
  - Explanation of tenancy agreement.
- Advice:**
- Maximising entitlement e.g. doctor's letters or support from other professional sources.
  - Advice on other possible housing options.
  - Advising on suitability of offers. Where appropriate, advising referral to independent Environmental Health Officer and or legal advisor.
  - Advice on pursuing any legal rights.
- Practical aid :**
- Assisting with formal application procedures.
  - Checking current status of application.
  - Obtaining supporting information from third parties.
  - Referral to legal advisor or specialist agency to pursue legal rights or challenge suitability of offer.
  - Mediation by contact with local authority to progress client's application.
  - Advocacy by representing client appealing against refusal of further offer.

\* see relevant sections

SBm/1

### Variation in evaluation / Design awareness

While variation may occur as a result of one, two, or all three of these factors, we are also aware of variations in approaches in terms of how to evaluate a home and its design standards.

*“Since the Lifetime Homes concept was first proposed by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation in the early 1990s, the standards have been revised and interpreted in a variety of ways. This has led to a range of estimates of their impact. Some of this variability is down to the way the standards have been expressed, some to the way they have been interpreted, and some to the estimates themselves.”*

This is another reason we propose thinking of not just supported housing variations but addressing the variations across all housing for older people, because a broader view on inclusive design will not only benefit more people

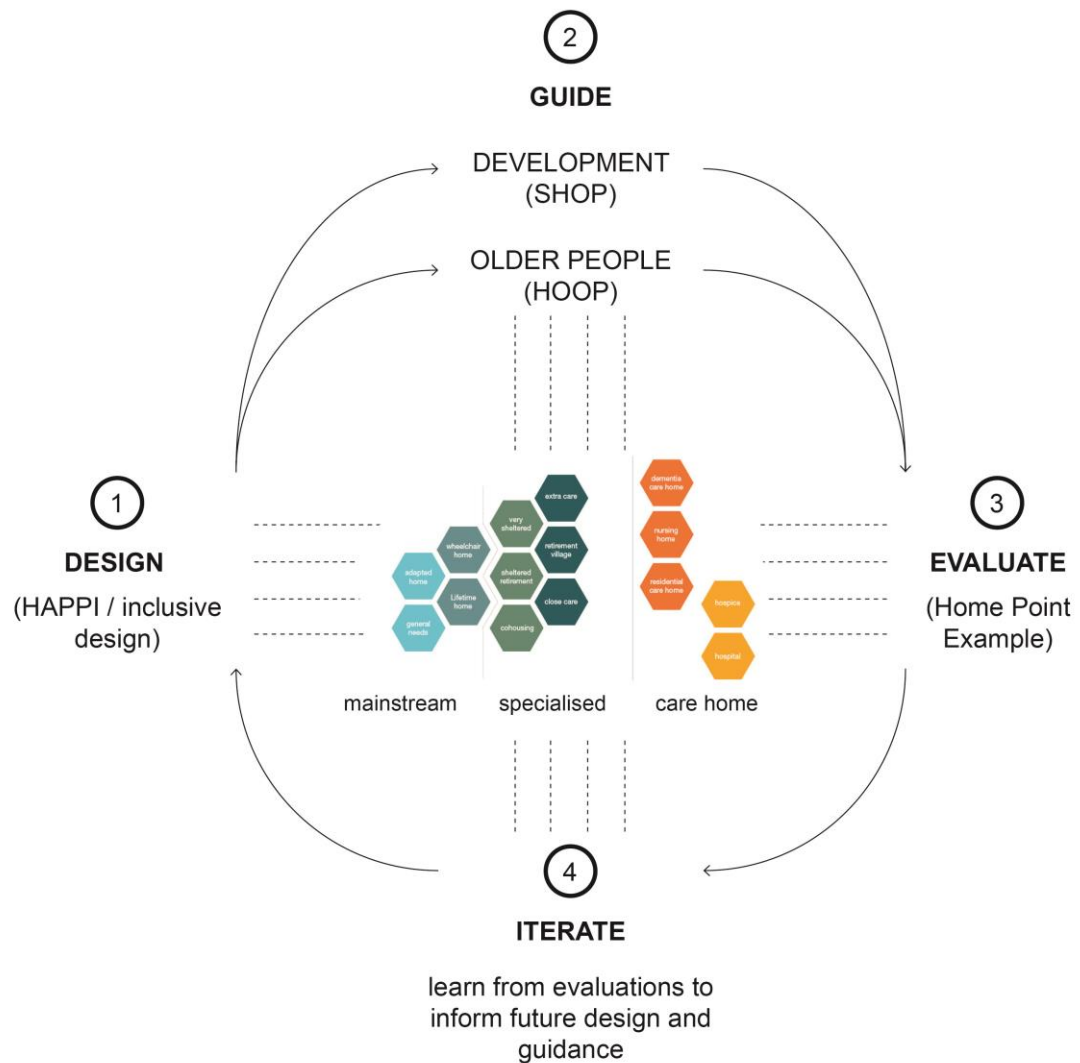
but also reduce variation in evaluation, ultimately raising the standard and quality of our housing.

### Combining and leveraging existing frameworks to raise standards

We have identified a four-step evaluation, advisory, and design process (Figure 4) that we believe would raise the standard of housing, including supported housing.

In his remarks at the previous APPG hearing, Cllr Ian Hudspeth suggested there is room to be more innovative when planning and building housing, while also creating links between planning, social care, and the quality of housing, and we believe there are existing tools and design approaches we can learn from and combine in order to do so.

Fig. 4 – Diagram of the four-step cycle.



## 1. DESIGN - HAPPI & Inclusive Design Standards

*“There is clearly no “one-size-fits-all” solution. The provision of the right housing for older people will need to be addressed across a number of fronts.”*

Tony Pidgley CBE, Chairman Berkeley Group plc

By enforcing inclusive design principles, the standards and choices available for all will be raised, benefiting current and future older people.

- Space and flexibility
- Daylight in the home and in shared spaces
- Balconies and outdoor space
- Adaptability and ‘care ready’ design
- Positive use of circulation space
- Shared facilities and ‘hubs’
- Plants, trees, and the natural environment
- Energy efficiency and sustainable design
- Storage for belongings and bicycles
- External shared surfaces and ‘home zones’

As Lifetime Homes articulated:

*“Inclusive design aims to give the widest range of people, including those with physical and/or sensory impairments, older people and children, convenient and independent access into and around the built environment (externally and internally) and also equal access to services.”<sup>7</sup>*

## 2. GUIDE

### 2a HOOP

*“We need to encourage people to think ahead, and work to raise expectations. Unless you have a vision about how things could be, you will be confined by what is available now.”*

Vera Bolter MBE

For a resident, HOOP provides clear information around the choices available, which encourages more people to choose a proactive move rather than be forced to make a reactive move due to crisis. The evaluation of First Stop Manchester demonstrated that “the HOOP service (which cost £40k per year) has the potential to save the tax payer £1,437,859 a year. Even if we were more conservative around residential care costs and halved these we would still be looking at an

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<sup>7</sup> <http://www.lifetimehomes.org.uk/pages/lifetime-homes-principles.html>

annual saving of £898,782 a year. Taking off the £40k for the post the minimum annual saving for 2015/16 would be £858,782.”<sup>8</sup>

#### 2b SHOP@

For the developer, operator, or built environment professional, SHOP@ helps shape decisions on the how, what and where to develop specialist housing for older people by enabling you to either enter your data on the demand for specialist accommodation for older people (including sheltered housing, extra care housing and residential) or benchmark against a selection of other indicators.

### 3. EVALUATE

Scottish Homes, Homepoint

An updated version of the Home Point checklist example as the potential to provide accountability and ultimately sustainability by ensuring that the HAPPI/Inclusive Design standards and the guidance are maintained.

### 4. ITERATE

This process provides the opportunity to be iterative and reflect on the design and guidance and feedback from the evaluation can feed into future cycles.

Inspired by Public Health England's *Spatial Planning for Health diagram* (Figure 5), we can envision a diagram series that captures this 4 step cycle by describing how design principles translate into sustainable impact with valuable health outcomes and costs savings (example of one principle's impact in Figure 6). Visuals like this could be a powerful way to communicate to a wide audience the relationship between the built environmental and our health, wellbeing, and the associated savings.

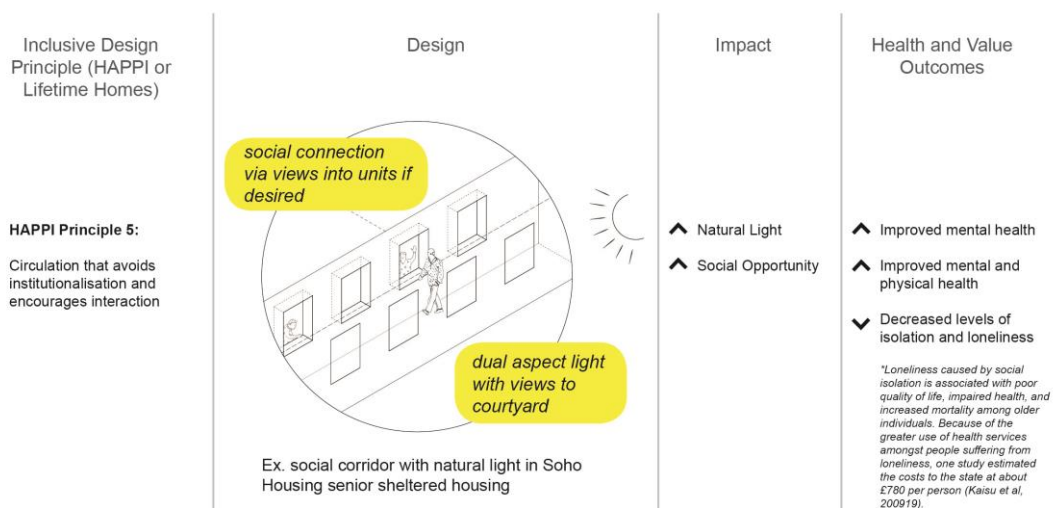
*Fig. 5 – Public Health England's Spatial Planning for Health diagram (below)*

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<sup>8</sup> <https://www.housinglin.org.uk/Topics/type/Housing-Options-for-Older-People-The-HOOP/>



Fig. 6 – Potential to visualise impact



## Conclusion

If an inclusive design approach is enforced through policy and made clear through advisory, more accessible housing will be made available across all housing types, improving the quality and condition of all homes, including supported housing. By leveraging existing inclusive design principles like HAPPI and Lifetime Homes to raise our standard of housing, people of all

ages will benefit from this effort to challenge and change the inequality of our current housing options.

For more examples of high-quality design, and a detailed exploration of best practice in extra care and supported housing for older people, including case studies, research, new and emerging models and much more, have a look at the Housing LIN website, which provides an unrivalled library of resources on this and related topics:

- Dedicated extra care housing pages:  
<https://www.housinglin.org.uk/Topics/browse/HousingExtraCare/>
- Design hub (covering HAPPI standards and more):  
<https://www.housinglin.org.uk/Topics/browse/Design-building/>
- Broader issues related to older people and their housing needs:  
<https://www.housinglin.org.uk/Topics/browse/HousingOlderPeople/>

*This submission was written on behalf of the Housing LIN by Carly Dickson, with additional input from the Housing LIN's Chief Executive, Jeremy Porteus, and Strategic Lead for Influencing and Networks, Clare Skidmore.*