

Older People's Housing – the future development of the land use planning system

Housing LIN Summit 2024
Thursday 29 February 2024

Older People's Housing Taskforce mission

To understand the market in England for older people's housing today and into the future; the enablers for older people when seeking to move into appropriate or specialist housing; opportunities and benefits of broadening provision and choice for older people, including continuing to live in their own home if they wish to do so; and to develop a viable and implementable approach for enhancing choice for older people in the housing market.





Where the Task Force Started

Workstream 1: People

- *Building the evidence*
- *Listening to voices of older people*
- *Information advice and advocacy*
- *Diversity (including dementia)*
- *Integrated housing, health, and social care*

Where the Task Force Started

Workstream 2: Products

- *Supporting people to be healthy in their own homes*
- *Technology and Smart Housing*
- *Building regulation, design, and accessibility*
- *Consumer protections and building consumer confidence, including information and advice*
- *Consumer finance and financial products*

Where the Task Force Started?

Workstream 3: Places

- *Planning Supply*
- *Assembling Land and Making Decisions*
- *Designing Age-Friendly Places*
- *Investment and Fiscal Measures*

Planning for Success

What is the Evidence Telling Us?

1. Need is increasing and will continue to do so.
 - *In 2023 there are 11 million people aged over 65 in England. This is projected to increase by 32% by 2043*
 - *We will go from 3.6 people of working age for every person over 65 to 2.9 over the same period. The nature of housing need and demand, therefore, is changing rapidly but the existing housing stock is not suited to the challenge.*
2. Supply of Older People's Housing is drastically failing to keep pace.
 - *Few sites are allocated for OPH, and appropriate sites can be hard for providers to identify. OPH development carries additional costs which make it difficult for providers to compete with mainstream house builders. Planning consents granted in England for OPH schemes are scarce and have fallen from about 180 in 2015 to just 80 in 2023.*
 - *Approval rates are particularly low for applications with more than 120 units (64% vs. 81% for major applications for general dwellings).*
 - *Developing as scale, however, is necessary as the cost of operational services related to care require economies of scale. Indeed, the average number of units in applications with care provision has grown from 51 in 2015 to 75 in 2023.*
 - *There is some evidence that appeals are becoming more successful for OPH.*

Planning for Success

Why are we failing?

- Most local authorities do not have a clear view on need, let alone planning policies to meet it.
- Around one third (36.2%) of Local Plans in England have no specific policy for OPH and even fewer make any specific allocations.
- National guidance doesn't help very much - NPPG currently states that *"it is up to the plan-making body to decide whether to allocate sites for specialist housing for older people."*
- Confusion over how to apply Use Classes Order
- Lack of effective join up between housing, health and care making schemes more difficult to deliver.
- Tendency for local planning authorities not to understand the specific demands of scheme viability.

What would a high performing local system look like?

- Clear understanding of types and numbers of accommodation required, translated into a target future provision map
- Local plan policies that facilitate the delivery of different types of older people's accommodation
- Designation and protection of site opportunities, backed by use of land assembly where required
- Expectation of specialist provision as part of larger strategic sites
- Development of long-term relationships with specialist developers and providers to deliver a portfolio of provision over a period of time, including trusted RPs
- Creation of small shared teams between housing, estates and care charged with delivering provision against plan
- Realism in terms of viability, with respect to conditions, s106, CIL etc.
- Flexibility with respect to tenure mix and ancillary facilities to reflect different viability equations
- Overall place design policies that support older people's developments in terms of wider liveability considerations
- Use of statutory care responsibilities to provide guaranteed levels of income for developments through nomination rights

Key questions for the Task Force report to answer

What do we need from national government?

How do we ensure greater consistency of planning and performance from local planning authorities?

How do we make it easier to secure planning consent for OPH schemes?

How do we facilitate viability and therefore deliverability of schemes?

What are the consequences for failure to meet need?

How do we ensure better place-making and product design?

What is role of the relevant national bodies to facilitate success?