Client: Winckworth Sherwood

Press release – The other end of the housing market report

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Later life housing largely ignored and not understood by government, says Winckworth Sherwood survey

Housing for older people is ignored by government, is failing to provide the choice of tenures and care options and is confusing for buyers, says a new report from law firm Winckworth Sherwood and Housing LIN, a specialist housing network of housing, health and social care providers.

Published today (Monday 13 March), the report – *The other end of the housing market: Housing for older people* - also notes a marked rise in the number of private developers moving into this market and fears over high service charges holding back decisions to move.

Charlotte Cook, a Partner specialising in later life housing at Winckworth Sherwood said: “An individual’s final home should be the pinnacle of their housing journey and not one of compromise. All too often that is not the case.

“Our survey shows that whilst local authorities and private developers are responding in some interesting and innovative ways, almost all feel that the Government has overlooked this important and expanding housing market in favour of headline grabbing initiatives aimed at first time buyers. Yet in 2017 more people will turn 70 than ever before.”

Survey highlights:

* 80% of those surveyed believe the Government’s apparent focus is unfairly skewed towards first time buyers
* 70% welcome the entry of private developers
* Location, availability and affordability are the key drivers behind the decision to move
* High and uncertainty surrounding service charges hold back decisions to move
* 48% believe we need to develop more extra care and supported housing schemes
* 45% believe local authority adult social care services should address housing need
* 46% believe housing should be an enforceable human right

The report also highlights that whilst the top and the bottom ends of the market are well catered for by private providers and local authorities, they account for just 20% of the market. The remaining 80% - the squeezed middle – face uncertainty and difficult decisions.

Jeremy Porteus, Managing Director at Housing LIN said: “People aged over 65 are involved in some 40% of all housing moves. The Government and our industry need a long term strategy that addresses the expectations and the care and support needs of all involved that reflects the scale of this market and to introduce measures that give older people confidence about the decisions they must take.”

*The other end of the housing market: Housing for older people* includes detailed interviews with Catalyst Housing, One Housing and Swindon Borough Council who share how they are responding to increased demand, the benefits cap and restricted local authority budgets.

*The other end of the housing market: Housing for older people* surveyed over 100 housing providers, local authorities and health and social care professionals and was conducted by Winckworth Sherwood and Housing LIN in December 2016 and January 2017.

A copy of *The other end of the housing market: Housing for older people* is available on request.

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