

Supported housing for people with long-term care and support needs

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Executive Summary

Purpose and scope of this research

This report is based on research undertaken by the Housing Learning and Improvement Network (Housing LIN)¹ for the National Housing Federation (NHF)² in relation to supported housing for people with long-term care and support needs (referred to here as ‘long-term supported housing’).

The research is intended to:

- Better understand the current challenges affecting the development of supported housing for people with long-term care and support needs.
- Based on the evidence gathered, set out recommendations for a more sustainable model for developing long-term supported housing in the future.
- Provide evidence that the NHF can use as part of its approach to influence the Government’s spending review.

This research involved 43 NHF members and other housing and support providers. The background research also involved speaking with representatives from, the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG), the Regulator of Social Housing (RSH), the Care Quality Commission (CQC) and Homes England.

Summary of recommendations

The evidence from the research highlights three core funding areas that are needed for the development of sustainable long-term supported housing by housing associations and their partners:

- **Capital funding:** The government should significantly increase capital funding overall, through Homes England, for investment in supported housing and allow for increased capital grant funding rates for supported housing development.
- **Funding for housing-related costs** (rent and service charges) through the welfare system: The government should make a long-term (10 year+) commitment to Housing Benefit continuing to meet housing-related costs in supported housing.
- **Funding for support costs:** The government should deliver funding to meet the costs of providing support to vulnerable people living in longer-term supported housing.

¹ <https://www.housinglin.org.uk/>

² <https://www.housing.org.uk/>

The following recommendations are made based on the evidence from this research:

- The government should reform the **Rent Standard** in relation to supported housing, allowing for greater flexibility in excess of the current 10% flexibility above that of general needs housing, which would help to cover the higher actual costs of developing and managing supported housing schemes.
- The current housing **capital funding** programme through NHS England and Improvement should be transferred to Homes England and delivered as part of the Care and Support Specialised Housing Fund. If this were combined with increased capital funding grant rates, this would stimulate development of more supported housing for people with complex disabilities by housing associations.
- Many housing providers would welcome sector-wide **oversight** of supported housing quality. However, any new oversight regime should be proportionate. The focus should be on consistent measures of outcomes for vulnerable people, sector-wide benchmarking and full transparency on the costs of providing supported housing.
- Any new oversight regime should recognise the higher relative costs of providing supported housing (compared to general needs housing) and the legitimate reasons for these higher costs.
- A more coordinated approach is required between the RSH, the CQC and local authorities to avoid 'gaps' in oversight, but also to avoid unintended duplication of oversight for supported housing providers.
- Any new national arrangements for supported housing led by MHCLG (following on from the anticipated 'National Statement of Expectations for Supported Accommodation') should require that local authorities develop a clear strategic understanding of the **need for supported housing in their area**, and a plan setting out the types of housing required, for whom, when and where.
- As part of this strategic approach, the government should strongly encourage local authorities to take a strategic view of **commissioning and procurement**, with 5-10 year contracts becoming the norm, moving away from many commissioners' continuing reliance on two-three year contracting cycles. Such a shift would help provide a much more stable, sustainable business environment for providers of supported housing.
- The government should publish benchmarking data about **rents and service charges** data for long-term supported housing, potentially by region, and provide guidance to local authorities to ensure they take a more consistent approach to the application of Housing Benefit eligibility regulations as they apply to supported housing.

1. Introduction

1.1. This report is based on research undertaken by the Housing Learning & Improvement Network (Housing LIN)³ for the National Housing Federation (NHF)⁴ in relation to supported housing for people with long-term care and support needs (referred to here as 'long-term supported housing').

1.2. The research is intended to:

- Better understand the current challenges affecting the development of supported housing for people with long-term care and support needs.
- Address the key questions set out below.
- Set out recommendations for a more sustainable model for developing long-term supported housing in the future, based on the evidence gathered.
- Provide evidence that the NHF can use as part of its approach to influence the government's spending review.

1.3. Qualitative research has been undertaken with a sample of NHF members and other, relevant stakeholders in relation to six key questions:

1. What are the significant barriers to supported housing development?
2. How can housing associations better meet the needs of local commissioners?
3. How can commissioners support a sustainable model of development and management of new schemes?
4. What is the role of the Regulator of Social Housing in achieving a sustainable model?
5. How can Homes England/the Greater London Authority (GLA)/ MHCLG support a more sustainable model of long-term supported housing?
6. Is there a need for more oversight of costs and quality of schemes?

1.4. The scope of this research is long-term supported housing, i.e. where housing providers may be providing a home for life, or at least for a long period of time for people with long-term care and support needs. This is not intended to cover supported accommodation for older people or supported housing for people who are or are at risk of homelessness (e.g. including vulnerable young people; people escaping domestic abuse).

³ <https://www.housinglin.org.uk/>

⁴ <https://www.housing.org.uk/>

- 1.5. A core focus of the research is to identify the reasons why many 'traditional', financially stable social housing providers are not currently developing supported housing for people with long-term care needs.
- 1.6. In addition to identifying the barriers, the research findings highlight the circumstances in which NHF members would be better able to deliver long-term, high quality supported housing, and how the government, local government and other stakeholders can make this a reality.

2. Approach

- 2.1. The research draws on a series of focus-group type discussions, co-ordinated by the NHF and other key partners. These groups included a wide range of NHF members, including both those that specialise in supported housing and those that provide a wide range of types of housing and services, and other providers of housing and support services (Appendix 1) through the following groups:
 - A dedicated round table discussion following the NHF's Health and Housing Open Event in Warrington, on 13 February 2020.
 - A workshop which took place as part of the NHF's South East Supported Housing Group meeting in London on 28 February 2020.
 - A discussion with the Voluntary Organisations Disability Group's Housing Network in London on 10 March 2020.
 - A meeting of the NHF's Learning Disability Housing Network in London on 11 March 2020.
- 2.2. The research also draws on intelligence and feedback gathered through a series of meetings and telephone discussions with representatives of:
 - The Regulator of Social Housing (RSH).
 - The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG).
 - The Care Quality Commission (CQC).
 - Homes England.
- 2.3. In addition, the research draws on the Housing LIN's recent experience (in 2019 and 2020) of conducting other engagement and qualitative research with a range of stakeholders about long-term supported housing commissioning, funding and delivery, including:

- Approximately 20 interviews (in person and by telephone) with housing associations, local authority commissioners and strategic housing leads across England as part of work commissioned through the Local Government Association's Housing Advisor Programmer and through the Association of Directors of Adult Social Services (ADASS)
- Two roundtable meetings about Specialised Supported Housing⁵ with NHS England and Improvement, RSH, MHCLG, ADASS, the LGA and local authority commissioners and local authority Housing Benefit leads.
- Co-facilitation (with Learning Disability England) of a workshop with people with learning disabilities and people who work closely with them, in order to understand their perspectives and experience of housing options (including supported housing).

2.4. The following sources of evidence were reviewed in relation to need for additional supported housing for people with long-term care and support needs and used this evidence as part of the discussions with NHF members and other stakeholders:

- The government's 'Supported Accommodation Review' (2016)⁶, provided a comprehensive overview of the scale, scope and cost of the supported housing sector, highlighting increasing demand for long-term supported housing for people with learning disabilities and mental health needs.
- The Personal Social Services Research Unit's research, 'Projected demand for supported housing in Great Britain 2015 to 2030' (2017)⁷ also identified that significant increases in supply of supported housing will be needed, both for older people and for younger people with long-term support needs from now until 2030. To meet this increase in demand, the research suggests that overall expenditure on supported housing across all user groups would need to rise significantly.
- Mencap's report, 'Funding Supported Housing for all: Specialised Supported Housing for people with a learning disability' (2018)⁸ identified further evidence of rising demand for long-term supported housing.

⁵ Specialised Supported Housing is defined in the Housing Rents (Exceptions and Miscellaneous Provisions Regulations 2016) SI 2016 No 390.

⁶https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/572454/rr927-supported-accommodation-review.pdf

⁷http://eprints.lse.ac.uk/84075/1/Wittenberg_Projected%20demand_2017_author.pdf

⁸<https://www.housinglin.org.uk/Topics/type/Funding-supported-housing-for-all-Specialised-Supported-Housing-for-people-with-a-learning-disability/>

3. Research findings

3.1. This section addresses the following questions, drawing from the qualitative research which was undertaken with NHF members and other stakeholders to inform these findings:

- What are the significant barriers to supported housing development?
- How can housing associations better meet the needs of local commissioners?
- How can commissioners support a sustainable model of development and management of new schemes?
- What is the role of the Regulator of Social Housing (and other regulatory organisations) in achieving a sustainable model?
- How can Homes England/the Greater London Authority (GLA)/Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government (MHCLG) support a more sustainable model of long-term supported housing?
- Is there a need for more oversight on costs and quality of schemes?

What are the significant barriers to supported housing development?

3.2. Responses to this question are set out under six core issues:

1. Funding for and delivery of care and support.
2. Capital funding.
3. Funding for housing-related costs (rent and service charges).
4. The cost of maintenance / health and safety.
5. Local authority strategic planning and commissioner engagement.
6. Feedback from people with learning disabilities and people who work with them.

Funding for and delivery of care and support

3.3. Since the cessation of the ring-fenced Supporting People programme, there has been a significant reduction in revenue funding specifically for the support element of supported housing, as distinct from care.⁹ The funding of support currently relies on discretionary commissioning by local authorities, which is often not available or

⁹https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/572454/rr927-supported-accommodation-review.pdf

offered, or on housing providers to subsidise the support costs from their own resources.

- 3.4. In some localities, housing (and care) providers reported a varied and sometimes fragmented approach to the procurement of social care, with regular retendering of care contracts by local authorities, and in some cases, without any clear strategic plan for the development and delivery of supported housing to meet local need.
- 3.5. This variability and lack of certainty about the funding for both care and support reduces the level of business certainty for housing providers, adding to the perceived overall vulnerability of supported housing as a delivery model.

Capital funding

- 3.6. Supported housing often has higher development costs than general needs housing, and can be significantly more expensive to develop; nevertheless, it can still offer excellent value for money and improved outcomes.¹⁰ There was a perception amongst housing providers that this is not always recognised by all capital funders and investors.
- 3.7. Some housing providers expressed the view that Homes England capital funding grant rates do not sufficiently reflect the additional costs of developing supported housing, resulting in supported housing development being unviable for some housing associations.
- 3.8. One example of this issue is that many supported housing providers find it challenging to secure the most appropriate sites for planned developments. The most appropriate sites (in relation to tenants' needs) may be in prime locations (with access to local amenities, and enabling good access for support staff, for example). However, such locations are also more attractive to private housing developers, who can pay higher prices, and thus are more likely to secure the best sites. Without increased capital subsidy, supported housing providers (and therefore, people who need supported housing) are at a significant disadvantage in such a competitive market environment.
- 3.9. Private capital investors are also an important source of capital funding; however, commissioners and housing providers are increasingly aware of the recent regulatory judgements and notices from the RSH in relation to some types of long-term supported housing that has been developed using private capital using lease-based housing models. Many housing associations expressed concern about the reputational damage this could potentially cause to the wider supported housing sector (see paragraphs 3.32-3.38).
- 3.10. The capital funding programme for housing/supported housing through NHS England and Improvement was seen by all participants as too focussed on a very limited 'cohort' of people with long-term care needs (the former 'Transforming Care' cohort).

¹⁰https://www.mencap.org.uk/sites/default/files/201804/2018.052%20Housing%20report_FINAL_WEB.pdf;
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/572454/rr927-supported-accommodation-review.pdf

The approach adopted by NHS England and Improvement of placing a legal charge on properties developed with this capital funding disincentivised many housing associations from using this capital funding because the housing association does not, in effect, own the property. Some participants identified that the process for obtaining capital funding from NHS England and Improvement is excessively bureaucratic.

Funding for housing-related costs (rent and service charges)

- 3.11. Housing Benefit is at the heart of the funding of supported housing. In almost all cases, it provides the revenue stream covering the housing-related costs involved, i.e. rent and service charges, because in the majority of circumstances tenants are on low incomes and do not have significant savings.
- 3.12. Participants raised concerns about reported variations in local authority decision-making about the interpretation and application of Housing Benefit eligibility rules and regulations in terms of the rent levels they are prepared to agree.
- 3.13. Several housing providers characterised this reported variability as a 'postcode lottery' locally. They described the negative impact in terms of funders and providers being unwilling to invest in and develop supported housing, due to the lack of business certainty and high level of financial risk, should Housing Benefit not be payable at the rates required to ensure that long-term supported housing schemes are financially viable.
- 3.14. Many participants note that funding for rent and levels of capital funding are linked; for example, some stakeholders highlighted that one effect of increasing capital grant rates would be that rents could be kept at more affordable levels, enabling some supported housing tenants to be able to work and therefore help meet other strategic outcomes of supported housing such as assisting tenants into employment.

The cost of maintenance, health and safety

- 3.15. Participants identified significantly greater concerns about health and safety, and maintenance costs, in recent years. This partly stems from the wider focus on the importance of fire safety in accommodation for people with care and support needs, heightened by several incidents, including the care home fire in Chingford, North London, in April 2018.¹¹
- 3.16. Another important factor is the rising number of people with complex needs and behaviours who are likely to require highly specific adapted (and therefore costly) housing settings in order to safely meet their needs.¹²

¹¹ <https://www.fire-magazine.com/specialised-housing-a-gap-in-the-safety-net>; https://www.nationalfirechiefs.org.uk/write/MediaUploads/NFCC%20Guidance%20publications/NFCC_Specialised_Housing_Guidance_-_Copy.pdf

¹² For example, York City Council explicitly positions its [Supported Housing Strategy](#) as contributing to the wider aims of the [York Health and Wellbeing Board](#), by ensuring the right supported housing options are available for those who need them, to increase or maintain people's independence: <https://www.york.gov.uk/AboutHHASCServices>; <https://www.housinglin.org.uk/Topics/type/Funding->

Local authority strategic planning and commissioner engagement

- 3.17. While some local authorities do have a clear vision and shared approach with housing providers, many others do not have a clear strategic understanding of the level and range of need for long-term supported housing in their area, or a robust strategic plan for how those housing needs should be met.
- 3.18. Several housing providers reported a lack of strategic engagement and partnership on the part of some local authority commissioners, and what they perceived to be an overly reactive approach to planning and commissioning supported housing in some areas.
- 3.19. Some housing providers suggested a causal factor is insufficient knowledge and understanding on the part of some commissioners of the supported housing development and delivery process, key hurdles and milestones, the timescales associated with new build supported housing development, and what needs to be in place in order to achieve a successful and sustainable approach.
- 3.20. Housing providers reported that many local authority commissioners routinely expect housing providers to carry all the development and management risks for supported housing; this is often then compounded through regular retendering of the care contract, resulting in a complex and volatile business proposition for housing providers. The effect of this is that many housing association boards consider supported housing development to be too risky.
- 3.21. Some stakeholders noted that for some of the people with the most complex needs, it is essential to plan for their housing needs in the most person-centred way, bespoke to each person's individual requirements. This creates its own challenges, preventing a 'predict and provide' model for development such as in general needs housing, and this can impact negatively on viability. This is not a positive business proposition for many funders and developers. Strong and robust relationships between commissioners and providers are a prerequisite if such arrangements are to be successful; challenges such as a lack of local strategic planning, and high turnover of staff in commissioning teams, can create additional barriers to this.
- 3.22. Discussions with commissioners reflected the negative impact of the funding reductions experienced in recent years by local authorities on their capacity to undertake long-term strategic planning and development work. Several participants highlighted that their teams have reduced in size in recent years, with each team member now holding responsibility for more client groups, service types and areas of priority need.

Feedback from people with learning disabilities and advocates/family members

- 3.23. From a resident/tenant perspective, people with learning disabilities reported that in their experience, housing choice can be very limited. They also described how difficult it can be for them to access useful information, advice and advocacy about their housing options (including supported housing), without which many people are unable to make real choices, even if choices are in theory available to them. Equally, respondents highlighted barriers to being able to change where and how they live, in the way that most non-supported housing residents would expect to be able to do as their housing needs and lifestyle preferences change throughout life.
- 3.24. Given the lack of housing choice, some respondents reported that they have been 'placed' in a particular supported housing setting mainly in order to fill a void, rather than to meet their own needs and preferences. As a result, they may not get to decide who they live with or who supports them.

How can housing associations better meet the needs of local commissioners?

- 3.25. Stakeholders agreed that there is an important role for housing associations engaging with commissioners to inform their strategic vision, to better understand local supported housing need, and how supported housing can deliver cost savings and efficiencies. One route to engagement might be by participating in local Health and Wellbeing Boards and other formal mechanisms for collaboration and partnership.¹³
- 3.26. Some respondents suggested that larger housing associations may be in a stronger position to meet the needs of local authority commissioners, due to the greater economies of scale which they can achieve, by comparison with smaller organisations that do not have the capacity to cross-subsidise their activities or to achieve economies of scale.
- 3.27. Where there are insufficient mainstream housing providers developing supported housing, due to the many factors outlined in the section above, stakeholders identified that the gap is often being filled by private investment lease-based housing providers making use of the Specialised Supported Housing definition within the Rent Standard. This is drawing serious concern from the RSH.
- 3.28. Housing providers expressed concern that in some cases, where commissioners lack a long-term strategic plan for supported housing, or where local authorities have a reactive and piecemeal approach to engagement with the market, commissioners may accept more speculative supported housing development proposals from private investment-backed RPs using solely lease-based models, even if the service model is high risk and the quality may be poor. A wider risk is the reputational impact these concerns, and the negative media coverage associated with the RSH's judgements, may be having on the supported housing sector more generally and housing providers' willingness to work with commissioners.

3.29. Other identified barriers to supported housing providers assisting commissioners included:

- Work force challenges, with many providers finding it difficult to recruit workers willing to work for the relatively low wages available in the care and support sector.
- Overall, a general sense that developing supported housing can be complex, costly and risky.

How can commissioners support a sustainable model of development and management of new schemes?

3.30. Participants identified that commissioners should undertake the following:

- Establish a clear strategic understanding of the need for supported housing, and the types of housing required, for whom, when and where.
- Develop better knowledge of the supported housing development and delivery process, and the challenges and hurdles inherent in this for housing providers.
- Undertake active management and engagement with the supported housing market, considering risk sharing (such as in relation to voids) with housing and care providers, especially when a development meets a strategic priority.
- Ensure that the commissioning team includes an expert/champion who has a detailed understanding of supported housing, how it is funded, and the relevant Housing Benefit issues, including the specific issues in relation to Specialised Supported Housing, in order to enable effective management and influencing of the provider market.
- Understand the importance of support, as well as care, in making supported housing work and in contributing to the positive outcomes for people, which forms a core part of the value for money and impact offered by supported housing. Without funding for the support services required by vulnerable tenants, much supported housing provision is not viable.
- Work closely with Housing Benefit teams to ensure a consistent approach to what can be covered by Housing Benefit in relation to rents and service charges in supported housing.
- Work closely with local authority strategic housing and planning policy leads to ensure a joined-up approach to the planning and development of supported housing, across housing and social care, for example by referencing and prioritising development of supported accommodation in Local Plans.

3.31. Housing providers suggested that although these actions could be viewed as resource-intensive for local authorities, they would deliver improved outcomes for people who require supported housing, as well as better value for the public purse. This is because need would be more closely matched with the most appropriate

supported housing solutions, demand for institutional care may be reduced¹⁴, while organisations promoting speculative, unsuitable and/or unjustifiably costly supported housing developments may be dissuaded from developing services within that local authority area.

What are the roles of the Regulator of Social Housing and the Care Quality Commission in achieving a sustainable model?

- 3.32. The RSH has highlighted concerns about some private-investment funded, lease-based models of supported housing. Discussions with the RSH, as well as with some local commissioners, underscored the importance of commissioners understanding the role of the RSH, the issues it has raised in relation to this specific lease-based model of supported housing and the associated risks.
- 3.33. In relation to any new oversight regime for supported housing providers, participants highlighted that the current role of the RSH in regulating Registered Providers should be recognised (not duplicated), and that any additional role and powers for the RSH do not create a disproportionate burden for housing providers, as this will risk disincentivising many housing associations from providing supported housing.
- 3.34. In relation to 'supported living', CQC guidance emphasises people having real choice as to where they live, and on ensuring a person-centred culture in the service, in terms of the way that people are supported and how care is provided.¹⁵ There remains an expectation from the CQC that 'campuses' will not be developed and funded, but that supported housing should be 'small scale and domestic' in nature. Some housing providers suggested that perceived restrictions (in terms of this guidance), or a lack of clarity relating to the position of supported housing developments containing more than 6 units, had limited their capacity to invest in and develop supported housing.
- 3.35. Depending on the detail of any new oversight regime for supported housing providers, there is a strong case for a more coordinated approach between the RSH, the CQC and local authorities to avoid 'gaps', but also to avoid unintended duplication of oversight for supported housing providers.

¹⁴ For example: <https://www.northumberland.gov.uk/NorthumberlandCountyCouncil/media/Health-and-social-care/Care%20support%20for%20adults/Extra-Care-and-Supported-Housing-Strategy-NCC-2018-v3.pdf>

¹⁵ https://www.cqc.org.uk/sites/default/files/20151023_provider_guidance-housing_with_care.pdf; https://www.cqc.org.uk/sites/default/files/20170612_registering_the_right_support_final.pdf

How can Homes England/ GLA/ MHCLG support a more sustainable model of long-term supported housing?

- 3.36. An approach for the government, suggested by several research participants, would be to provide additional capital grant funding overall for supported housing, e.g. through the Homes England Care and Support Specialised Housing Fund, and to offer more generous capital grant rates for supported housing, in order to encourage its development, better meet the realistic cost of developing supported housing and help close the viability gap.
- 3.37. Some participants suggested that reform of the Rent Standard is required, inasmuch as it relates to supported housing: allowing for greater flexibility in excess of the current 10% flexibility above that of general needs housing would help to cover the higher actual costs of developing and managing supported housing schemes.
- 3.38. Some participants identified that the government should allocate funding specifically to meet the support costs incurred by providers in delivering and managing supported housing.
- 3.39. One approach, suggested by a small number of participants, would be for MHCLG to establish a single, ring-fenced funding pot for support funding, to be distributed by Homes England / GLA, alongside capital grant funding (as happened when the former Housing Corporation made allocations of Supported Housing Management Grant to housing associations towards the additional costs of managing supported housing). It was suggested that an incentive would need to be built into any grant application processes to ensure a collaborative approach between housing providers and local authorities.

Is there a need for more oversight of costs and quality of schemes?

- 3.40. Housing providers reported that they would welcome more rigorous oversight of housing quality (since most providers can demonstrate the quality and outcomes of their supported housing services). At the same time, any new regime should be proportionate, and not onerous and costly. The focus should be on benchmarking and on identifying outliers, focusing on true outcomes and on ensuring full transparency in terms of all the costs.
- 3.41. Most stakeholders suggested that the government should embed into any new oversight arrangements a clear acceptance of the higher relative costs of supported housing (compared to general needs housing), and the reasons for these higher costs.
- 3.42. The research highlighted that a key requirement for any new oversight regime should be that the supported housing scheme has the support of the relevant local authority (i.e. the local authority where the scheme is located) to minimise speculative development.

4. Recommendations

- 4.1. Based on the evidence from this research, recommendations to deliver a more sustainable approach to developing long-term supported housing in the future are set out below.
- 4.2. They are intended to support an informed discussion with Government, regulators, policy makers and funders about a more sustainable business environment for encouraging investment in and development of supported housing for people with long-term care and support needs.
- 4.3. In summary, the evidence from this research highlights three core 'pillars' that are required to promote development of sustainable long-term supported housing by housing associations and their partners:
 - **Capital funding:** the government should significantly increase overall capital funding for investment in supported housing through Homes England and allow for increased capital grant funding rates for supported housing development.
 - **Funding for housing-related costs** (rent and service charges) through the welfare system: the government should make a long-term commitment (10 years+) to Housing Benefit continuing to meet housing-related costs in supported housing.
 - **Funding for support costs:** the government should deliver funding to meet the costs of providing support to vulnerable people living in longer-term supported housing.

Funding considerations for encouraging development of long-term supported housing

- 4.4. Through Homes England, the government should increase the level of capital investment in supported housing and be more flexible in providing increased capital funding grant rates (per unit/per scheme) that reflect the real costs of developing supported housing.
- 4.5. The government should make a long-term commitment to meeting housing-related costs in supported housing, by confirming that Housing Benefit will continue to meet these housing costs (i.e. rent and service charges) for at least the next 10 years.
- 4.6. The government should reform the Rent Standard in relation to supported housing, allowing for greater flexibility in excess of the current 10% flexibility above that of general needs housing, which would help to cover the higher actual costs of developing and managing supported housing schemes.
- 4.7. The government should commit to meeting the costs of providing support services to the vulnerable people who live in supported housing, funding for which has drastically declined since the ring fence around local authority Supporting People funding was removed.

- 4.8. The current housing capital funding programme through NHS England and Improvement should be transferred to Homes England and delivered as part of the Care and Support Specialised Housing Fund. If this were combined with increased capital funding grant rates, more supported housing for people with complex disabilities would be stimulated and developed by housing associations.

Regulation and oversight of long-term supported housing

- 4.9. Many housing providers would welcome sector-wide oversight of supported housing quality, as the vast majority of housing associations deliver this already. However, any new oversight regime should be proportionate. The focus should be on consistent measures of outcomes for vulnerable people, sector-wide benchmarking and full transparency in terms of the costs of providing supported housing.
- 4.10. Any new oversight regime should recognise the higher relative costs of providing supported housing (compared to general needs housing) and the legitimate reasons for these higher costs.
- 4.11. A more coordinated approach is required between the RSH, the Care Quality Commission (CQC) and local authorities to avoid 'gaps' in oversight, but also to avoid unintended duplication of oversight for supported housing providers.
- 4.12. Any additional regulatory powers for the RSH in relation to supported housing should avoid creating a disproportionate burden, which would risk disincentivising many registered providers from providing supported housing.
- 4.13. New oversight arrangements should ensure that supported housing development is supported by the relevant local authority (i.e. the local authority where the scheme is located) to avoid speculative development.
- 4.14. Regulators including the CQC should align their approach regarding the interpretation of 'small and domestic in scale' in terms of supported housing developments, encouraging person centred services for individuals, while maintaining an acceptance of the need for economic and practical deliverability. Without this balance, there is a risk of a reduction in supported housing options for people with long-term care and support needs.

Commissioning considerations for long-term supported housing

- 4.15. Any new national arrangements for supported housing led by MHCLG (following on from the anticipated 'National Statement of Expectations for Supported Accommodation') should require that local authorities develop a clear strategic understanding of the need for supported housing in their area, and a plan setting out the types of housing required, for whom, when and where.
- 4.16. As part of this strategic approach, government should strongly encourage local authorities to take a strategic view of commissioning and procurement, with 5-10 year contracts becoming the norm, moving away from many commissioners' continuing

reliance on two–three year contracting cycles. Such a shift would help provide a much more stable, sustainable business environment for providers of supported housing.

- 4.17. Local authorities need to take a more proactive role in identifying suitable sites and land assembly activity that can make the development process for supported housing easier for housing providers. In some circumstances this needs to include nil or low cost sites.
- 4.18. Government should publish benchmarking data about rents and service charge data for long-term supported housing, potentially by region, and provide guidance to local authorities to ensure they take a more consistent approach to the application of Housing Benefit eligibility regulations as they apply to supported housing.
- 4.19. Local authority commissioners should work more closely with the RSH to ensure they have a consistent approach to regulation and contract monitoring for providers of supported housing; this will also assist commissioners to be better informed about emerging regulatory issues with supported housing, for example in relation to the lease-based model of specialised supported housing.
- 4.20. Commissioners should undertake active engagement with the supported housing market in their area, building strong relationships with providers, and risk sharing with housing providers (for example, in relation to voids), to encourage supported housing development.
- 4.21. When commissioning effective housing solutions for people with the most complex needs, commissioners need to incentivise housing providers, for example with capital funding and making sites available if bespoke, highly personalised supported housing arrangements are to be successful.
- 4.22. The government’s long-awaited vision and plan for adult social care in England should reflect the essential role of supported housing in delivering independence and wellbeing for many people with long-term care and support needs.

Appendix 1: Organisations that participated in this research

Accord	Leonard Cheshire
Active Prospects	Livewest
Advance Housing	Look Ahead
Avalon Group	Macintyre
Care Quality Commission	Magenta Living
Centre 404	Milestones Trust
Certitude	Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government
CESSA Housing	Nexus
Choice Support	NHS England and NHS Improvement
Connect	Onward Housing
Dimensions (UK) Ltd	Outlook Care
Enham Trust	Places for People
FitzRoy Support	Progress Housing Group
Golden Lane Housing	Regulator of Social Housing
GM Housing Partners	Reside
Golden Lane Housing	Riverside
Havant Housing Association	Sense
Heritage Care	Southdown Housing
HF Trust	The You Trust
Hightown	Transform
Home Group	Together Housing
Homes England	Trowers and Hamlins
Johnnie Johnson	United Response
Jigsaw Homes	WHG

The research also drew on:

- Engagement with people with learning disabilities with lived experience of supported housing, co-facilitated with Learning Disability England.
- Round table discussions with local authority commissioners, representatives of the Association of Directors of Adult Social Services (ADASS) and the Local Government Association (LGA).

Appendix 2: Case study examples of supported housing for people with long-term care and support needs

Golden Lane Housing: two accessible homes in Leeds for ten people with a learning disability

Completed 2019

Operating across England, Wales and Northern Ireland, Golden Lane Housing provides supported living accommodation to nearly 2,200 people with a learning disability in 1,106 properties that they own or lease.

Overview of the scheme

This scheme was designed to meet the needs of ten people with a learning disability, who had been living together for many years in a residential care home in Leeds. Everyone wanted to remain in the same area as they knew it well and it is close to their activities. Two large detached properties were purchased in the same area and close together so the group could maintain their friendships and continue to receive support from staff they knew well. Had the scheme not been developed the residents would have had to move into Leeds City Council's available housing vacancies, which would have meant they could no longer live together.

The ten residents moved into their two new homes on 28 October 2019, with five people living in each of the two properties. Leeds Mencap worked closely with everyone. It was important to find out who wanted to live together along with what suited their needs. It was agreed, Diane, Debra, Nigel, Sam and Sam would share and Hazel, Sandra, Susan, Shane and Sharon would live together. Leeds Mencap provide the personal care for the people living in their homes.

Development process and financial details

Golden Lane Housing worked closely together with Mencap, Leeds Mencap and the commissioning team from Leeds City Council. The closure of the residential care home was only months away and the level of urgency had mounted when Mencap approached Golden Lane Housing, after Leeds Mencap had reached out to see if they could help. Golden Lane Housing's development manager discussed options with the CEO at Leeds Mencap before meeting with the local authority to see how they could support the individuals.

The two large detached properties were purchased and specially adapted using the capital raised by Golden Lane Housing at a cost of around £1.2 million. They negotiated a couple of extra months with the developer who was buying the care home. Contractors agreed to a faster work schedule and work started on site to make them accessible. New wet rooms were installed, and ramps built so people could gain easy access. Ground floor bedrooms were created and new kitchens and bathrooms installed. Each person chose the wallpaper and colours for their bedrooms. Nearly everyone has an en-suite bathroom or wet room.

As a specialist supported housing provider, Golden Lane Housing is exempt from the Regulator of Social Housing rent standard. The rent is paid by Housing Benefit, using Housing Benefit regulations applied to landlords meeting supported housing exempt status requirements. The service charge amount is £17.38 per person per week. The support package is funded by the local authority.

Evaluating the process

Michelle Wilks, scheme manager from Leeds Mencap explained:

“It couldn’t have turned out better for everyone! I had worked at the residential care home for over 20 years. We knew it was going to close, and the team spent a lot of time supporting people to understand why they were moving and looking at choices. We were involved every step of the way.

Golden Lane Housing were great. They listened and worked with us and carried out the adaptations. They worked to a tight deadline, and all the work was completed on time.

Both properties are absolutely fantastic. They are spacious and homely with lovely gardens. It’s great as they’re only round the corner from each other too.

The day of the move came. I’ll never forget the look on their faces as they walked through the door. They were so thrilled, it was better than their dreams. Supported living is more personalised. People are getting more time with staff, which has opened up a new world of possibilities. I can already see a difference; people are getting more involved in doing things around the house. They have already decided on a rota for cooking and cleaning!

I’ve noticed people are more relaxed, happier in themselves and their confidence has grown in a short space of time. I went into the upstairs sitting room on the second day, and Sam and Nigel had their jigsaws out already, they just felt so settled and at home. It’s so nice; everyone is constantly telling me how much they love it!”



Nigel, Golden Lane Housing tenant said: “It’s brilliant here.”



Future development plans

The need to house people with a learning disability is greater than ever and the demand will continue to increase. Golden Lane Housing responds to the changing environment and builds partnerships with local authorities and other providers.

Golden Lane Housing will continue to raise capital to purchase and specially adapt the much needed properties for people with a learning disability. Their capital programme allows them to tailor housing to meet tenants’ current and future needs and aspirations.

To ensure they meet the wider need, they continue to lease properties from private landlords, support providers and local authorities. These provide some excellent housing options for tenants and Golden Lane Housing will continue to pursue more of these opportunities in the future. Their lease arrangements ensure that Golden Lane Housing are protected from risk and they meet the expectations of their regulator.

Golden Lane Housing is currently working with NHS England to house people through the Transforming Care Programme. The work they do with them is very valuable and allows individuals to return back to their home borough by purchasing and developing bespoke properties with NHS England funding.

The current grant funding scheme with Homes England does not work for supported housing. Golden Lane Housing and others in the industry are having positive discussions with the Social Housing Regulator to highlight this. They hope future grant funding will make it viable to develop supported housing schemes and allow them to house a wide range of people with a learning disability.

Thirteen Group: Fellows Hall, Loftus, scheme for seven residents with mixed support needs

Completed 2016

Thirteen Group manage 34,043 homes in Tees Valley, Tyneside, Northumberland and North Yorkshire, including 3,091 supported housing units.

Overview of the scheme

[Fellows Hall in Loftus](#) is a supported scheme providing independent accommodation for seven customers who have a mixture of support needs, from requiring 24-hour 1-1 support to a few hours support a day to be able to live independently. The scheme is designed so that those with high support needs, such as autism or learning difficulties, are able to live as independently as possible in the community and are not limited to the more restrictive forms of accommodation in hospital and secure settings.

Completed in October 2016, it was the first scheme developed in partnership with Positive Individual Proactive Support (PIPS), a branch of the Tees, Esk and Wear Valley Mental Health Trust, specifically set up to deliver intensive support to customers leaving hospital settings to live in the community.

Loftus is a rural area with small-scale local amenities. It was felt that the area was ideal to assist customers in integrating with the community; less imposing and intimidating than larger town areas, while still offering the services that customers needed. The property was also already laid out in a way that would require minimal re-development so that Thirteen could provide independent accommodation and a staff flat.

The scheme is home to seven residents, all with their own self-contained flats, and has one staff flat and a staff member on site 24/7. Residents have a range of needs, all requiring some form of support from PIPS. The staff flat is sometimes used as a communal space for crafts etc.

All customers receive support, with some also requiring additional assistance with care needs. If the scheme did not exist, the residents would most likely be housed in hospital or secure settings. Some customers had failed general needs tenancies due to lack of support.

Development process:

The scheme was developed in partnership with PIPS, NHS England, Esh Property Services, Identity Consult, and the local authority. Capital investment was £330,000, in the form of an NHS England grant, which was used to fund the redevelopment of existing buildings owned by Thirteen.

Rent is £77.22 per week (affordable rent level) and service charge is £91.09 per week. Of the service charge, £35.76 per week is an Intensive Housing Management charge. Support is jointly funded by the local authority and local Clinical Commissioning Group, with some contributions from individual customers.

Evaluating the process

What worked well?

Development of the partnership with PIPS enabled Thirteen to understand specific customer needs and build up a trusting environment from the start. The partners produced collaboration documents together so they agreed which party was responsible for what prior to the completion of the building.

The scheme has been successful in creating a safe environment for customers in a quiet locality, and helping them sustain a tenancy where they haven't been able to before. A specific team from Thirteen manages the properties. They understand the specific requirements of the residents and are able to flex services to suit.

There are multiple benefits for people moving out of hospital and into life in the community. Once admitted, people often end up in a hospital bed long term, because there are limited suitable community placements available. This is a poor use of limited hospital resources and can have a profoundly negative effect on people who could live independently with the right support.

A hospital bed can cost £2.5k per week. Once an individual moves into the community care costs can reduce, saving up to £500-£1000 per week as part of the person's commissioned care package.

This was a pilot scheme with small number of properties that enabled Thirteen to apply the learning to subsequent projects. All parties were willing to learn and develop as part of the development process, creating greater understanding of each other's needs. Joint team meetings and joint training helped to increase staff knowledge on a range of issues, including autism awareness and tenancy agreements.

Thirteen had great local political support for the scheme which was invaluable. They now hope to be able to duplicate the process for future schemes.

What was most difficult?

Getting the initial refurbishment right was challenging, as every resident's requirements are slightly different and not always possible to identify until they have moved in. For example, for some customers using standard fixtures and fittings can result in lots of damage in property. Understanding how to recover funds for damages in cases where the resident does not have capacity can also be challenging, as can establishing who is financially responsible for additional requirements such as soundproofing.

The technical aspects of tenancy agreements also proved challenging. Some customers had especially high support needs, to the extent that the care provider wanted to be able to lock doors and have CCTV installed. This raised issues around exclusivity of access to a property. It was sometimes difficult for PIPS to identify appropriate customers who could manage a tenancy with the right level of support.

Accessing the NHS capital grant was a long and complex process and Thirteen felt there were onerous conditions applied to the grant; for example, the NHS wanted first charge on the building. These issues were resolved but it was a frustrating process. There were also

tensions with social care teams and local authority housing benefit requirements, which had to be carefully negotiated. The whole process took nearly two years to navigate.

Future development plans

This scheme has already been replicated in other areas with different levels of customer need, applying learning from completed schemes and improving the process each time. Thirteen make sure to secure funding for additional works prior to making any changes to a property. If other funding opportunities become available they will look at their ability to support more of these schemes.

Platform Housing Group: The Burrows, Droitwich Spa, eight self-contained flats for young adults with Autistic Spectrum Disorder

Completed 2019

Platform Housing Group manage 45,510 properties across the East and West Midlands, including 3,326 supported housing properties

Overview of scheme

Completed in June 2019, this scheme consists of 8 self-contained flats for young adults with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). The land is in the grounds of another property owned by Platform, which is used for the same client group. It sits in a quiet location, which is beneficial for the young adults, but is also within walking distance of Droitwich town.

This development has been specifically designed from the outset with the client group in mind and features two large communal living areas, a 'Snoezelen' (multi-sensory room), as well as office areas for the care provider and multi-sensory landscaped gardens.

Care and support are provided on a 24/7 basis by a third-party care provider and commissioned by Worcestershire County Council. If this scheme had not been developed, the alternative for residents would have been full-time residential care.

Development process

The scheme was developed with considerable investment from both Homes England and Worcestershire County Council. Homes England contributed approximately £245,000 to the project and Worcestershire County Council around £415,000. Platform already owned the land that the development is built on and contributed a further £900,000 to the scheme.

The properties are available for a mixture of shared ownership and Affordable Rent, with service charges included. Where residents require care and support, funding is via the local authority or self-funding.

Evaluating the process

What worked well?

The collaborative nature of this project was really successful. A lengthy design process was undertaken, welcoming input from the charity organisation Autism West Midlands (AWM) as well as Worcestershire County Council and Homes England, who all informed the design to best suit the specific needs of the young adults who now call this building home. This project is a testament to this collaborative approach.

What was most difficult?

The scheme involved a complex planning process owing to its green belt location. 'Very Special Circumstances' are required to develop in such areas and to clearly demonstrate 'Very Special Circumstances' required a great deal of planning and collaboration. The scheme took almost six years from inception to completion.

Future development plans

Platform have two further retirement villages currently at the planning stage, but currently no plans for any more schemes for adults with ASD or long-term learning disabilities.

Southdown: Southdown Court, Hailsham, six self-contained supported living flats for people with complex needs

Completed 2019

Operating in East Sussex, West Sussex and Brighton and Hove, Southdown is a specialist provider of services for people with learning disabilities and complex needs. They have played an active role in supporting the implementation of the Transforming Care programme at a local Sussex level, working with 10,400 clients every year and managing 618 supported housing units, including 32 registered care units.

Overview of scheme

In November 2018, Southdown started re-development of a former residential care site to create six self-contained supported living flats for people with complex needs, as part of the Government's Transforming Care Programme. The £1.5 million Southdown Court development is the outcome of over four years of partnership working with Brighton and Hove City Council, NHS England and Homes England.

Completed in August 2019, the six new flats were designed to a very high specification to provide suitable and secure home environments for clients with complex individual support needs that could not be met within existing Brighton services. The site for the scheme became available through negotiation with Brighton and Hove after an existing registered care service became unviable.

The flats incorporate innovative design features and technological solutions to reduce risks, such as impact resistant walls, air heating and cooling, specialist bathrooms and kitchens, CCTV and remote monitoring, alarm systems, sprinkler systems and water shut off devices. Each flat also benefits from a private entry and individual outdoor space.

The six residents are all part of the Transforming Care cohort, with behaviours that challenge services. If this scheme did not exist, these clients would most likely have to be housed in long-stay institutions and inpatient settings. The scheme allows residents to live more independently than would otherwise be possible.

Shared space would be extremely problematic for this client group so each flat is fully self-contained, isolated from each other with their own individual front doors and access. Laundry facilities are communal. There are staff offices on site and facilities for staff and visiting professionals and the service is staffed 24/7.

Development process

Southdown prepared a detailed design of the proposed scheme prior to entering into a design and build contract. They partnered with Brighton and Hove council, who were able to provide the site on a 99-year lease basis with a peppercorn arrangement, and received some capital funding from NHS England Transforming Care fund.

Overall the scheme cost £1.586 million, with £506,000 coming from NHS England's Transforming Care fund, £211,000 of new Homes England grant and £224,000 of recycled Homes England Grant, and £645,000 of investment by Southdown.

All the units are let at social rents. There is no readily accessible market rent comparator in the area upon which to base Affordable Rents. In addition, the rents include higher than usual service charges due to the Social Rents based upon depreciated replacement cost. The service charge is £138 per unit per week, due to communally provided heating and cooling and the extent of the specialist equipment provided across the scheme. All of the support funding comes from Brighton and Hove council.

Evaluating the process

What worked well?

The local authority partnership working worked well, although took a great deal of persistence. Southdown were able to closely control the design of the scheme, through developing a detailed specification early on.

It has proved vital to have an initial financial risk sharing agreement. Ten months after completion, the scheme still has two voids, in part due to coronavirus. The risk sharing agreement covered funding for pre-opening staff induction, core support costs even if the scheme was not fully occupied, and rent payment from opening until first let for each unit. Agreeing this model with the local authority proved challenging, but ultimately successful.

What was most difficult?

There was a significant challenge in aligning approvals for the acquisition of land and the deployment of grant funding from Homes England and NHS England, alongside negotiations

with the local authority on nominations, sustainable hourly rates and financial management of vacancies. The requirement to utilise NHS England and Recycled Capital Grant Fund grant 'in-year' proved problematic when, for reasons beyond Southdown's control, the development start was delayed and grant had to be reapplied for.

Overall scheme viability issues were a challenge due to low grant rates, high build costs, the CQC requirement to limit the scheme size to a maximum of six units, limited ability to cross subsidise units from a broader development portfolio, as would be the case for other non-supported schemes, and the requirement to charge social rents as a condition of grant funding.

Ongoing operating costs remain high because of the high number of specialist design features, long void times and slow transitions into accommodation, the expectation of client damage and limited ability to recharge tenants for damage that is a by-product of their condition, the maintenance of staff facilities without an associated income, and the cost of adapting properties for new clients.

Future development plans

Southdown has an ambition and funding to maintain a small, but active supported housing development programme.

Although the experience of Southdown Court has been positive and they may eventually wish to develop further Transforming Care specialist units, their immediate priority is the development of supported move-on accommodation for clients with a history of homelessness and mental health.

There remain challenges due to ongoing uncertainty over the classification of units as supported housing. The use of social rents, combined with higher operating costs connected with the client group and low grant rates, continue to pose challenges to feasibility.

Grand Union Housing: High Oaks, St Albans, four flats for adults with learning disabilities

Completed 2014

Grand Union Housing Group owns and manages 12,184 homes – including 546 supported units across 114 schemes of varying sizes – across Bedfordshire, Milton Keynes, Buckinghamshire, Hertfordshire, Kent, Lincolnshire, Cambridgeshire, South London, Herefordshire, Northamptonshire and Luton.

Overview of scheme

The High Oaks supported living scheme for adults with learning disabilities in St Albans, Hertfordshire, is made up of four self-contained flats and has been designed to be fully accessible for wheelchair users.

Opened in 2018, it's one of the newest supported living schemes developed by Grand Union. High Oaks was transformed from a Walsingham Support registered care home that was at risk of closure into a modern scheme with a light and spacious communal area used as a lounge, diner and summer room. It overlooks a large, level communal garden that has been landscaped with user-friendly raised planters where the customers grow flowers and vegetables. These planters were funded by the money raised by people running the London Marathon in aid of Grand Union.

Walsingham Support provide on-site care, with differing levels of support available 24-7, specific to the individual's needs. The customers also benefit from attending locally run day centres, as well as the close proximity to a small number of local shops, a church and parks. The alternative housing options for those customers would undoubtedly be residential care, whereas this scheme has provided them with a home for life with a secure tenure.



Development process

Without strong partnership working, the scheme would never have been completed. Hertfordshire County Council were heavily involved in decision making and helped meet individual health and social care needs.

The scheme cost just over £1.2 million to develop, made up of £635,000 capital investment, £435,000 investment by Grand Union, and £200,000 grant from Homes England and Hertfordshire County Council. The redevelopment and extension allowed for customers to be involved in the whole process of seeing their homes develop, from choosing which flat they preferred and looking at the plans, to making choices for their kitchen cupboards, worktops and flooring throughout their flat.

Customers pay Affordable Rent, which has been capped at the Local Housing Allowance level for one-bedroom flats, including service charges. Care and support costs are funded via the local authority.

Evaluating the process

Getting High Oaks completed wasn't without its challenges. Finding suitable short-term accommodation for the existing customers to live in whilst the redevelopment work was completed was a real challenge and they often asked when they were going home during the development stage. Thankfully they now all love their new homes.

Future development plans

Grand Union is committed to building more supported living schemes and a number are due to be completed this financial year. This includes a redevelopment similar to High Oaks that is also in St Albans. They have completed a scheme at Baker Street in Potters Bar, which is a similar model to High Oaks, and are currently redeveloping a scheme at Upper Lattimore.

Progress Housing Group: Kingsbridge Way, Nottingham, shared accommodation for four adults with learning disabilities or ASD

Completed 2017

Progress Housing Group manage more than 10,500 homes across the country. They also support over 3,200 supported living residents.

Overview of scheme

Progress was commissioned by Nottingham City Council to develop a shared home for four individuals with learning disabilities or ASD at Kingsbridge Way in Nottingham. This client group display high levels of challenging behaviours and would otherwise be forced to live in a residential care setting.

The scheme involved the redevelopment of an existing property, owned by the local authority. Residents have communal facilities and the scheme is staffed 24/7. Care and support is provided by Community Integrated Care.

Development process

Progress worked in partnership with the local commissioner, who provided a brief for the scheme. The property was redeveloped from the existing building owned by the local authority. The total cost of the development was £1,067,136, which was covered by Progress without capital grant.

Rent is set at Affordable Rent levels for specialised supported housing, of £167.75 per resident per week. Service charges are £21.79 per week. Care and support is funded by the local authority.

Evaluating the process

What worked well?

The fact that the site was owned by the local authority ensured that the acquisition process worked well. The scheme was supported by the commissioner as specialised supported housing, and they provided a clear brief for the redevelopment.

What was difficult?

Being a refurbishment project, there were limitations on what could be achieved within the confines of the existing property. The total scheme cost exceeded the budget due to unforeseen circumstances and the entirety of the cost was born by Progress.

Future development plans

Progress are committed to providing supported living accommodation on a national basis, responding to the requirements of local authority commissioners and support providers. Delivery will be in line with Progress' current development strategy and all schemes will fully meet the specialised supported housing exemption standards. The development strategy is for Progress to develop a minimum of 60 units of supported living accommodation per year. This will predominantly be blocks of new build, self-contained apartments. However where there is demand they are still prepared to deliver shared accommodation, either in the form of new build or refurbishment projects.

About the Housing Learning and Improvement Network (LIN)

This report has been produced by Clare Skidmore and Ian Copeman from the Housing LIN.

The Housing LIN is the leading 'learning lab' for a growing network of housing, health and social care professionals in England, Wales and Scotland involved in planning, commissioning, designing, funding, building and managing housing, care and support services for older people and vulnerable adults with long-term conditions.

Previously responsible for managing the UK Government Department of Health's Extra Care Housing Fund, the Housing LIN is called upon by a wide range of statutory and other organisations to provide expert advice and support regarding the implementation of policy and good practice in the field of housing, care and support services.

Recognised by government and industry as a leading 'knowledge hub' on specialist housing, our 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
- provide intelligence on latest funding, research, policy and practice developments, and
- raise the profile of specialist housing with developers, commissioners and providers to plan, design and deliver aspirational housing for an ageing population and other people with care and support needs.

Contact details:

Email: info@housinglin.org.uk

Web: <http://www.housinglin.org.uk>

Twitter: [@HousingLIN](https://twitter.com/HousingLIN) [@HousingLINNews](https://twitter.com/HousingLINNews) [@HLINConsult](https://twitter.com/HLINConsult)