ILC Friday three - 7 July 2023

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ILC Friday three

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Solution of the week - an EPC for age readiness



The NHS's 75th birthday this week has resulted in many column inches and claims from all sides of the political spectrum that it could be managed better. Constructive and consensual reform is always difficult when the enveloping politics are so febrile. The same goes for addressing social care - which if properly tackled would certainly reduce pressures on the NHS.

Care needs to become more preventative, more people-centred, and delivered more efficiently - and one way to ensure this is through housing policy. Published by the ILC last year, the Mayhew Review highlighted too many older people live in unsuitable homes. The report, supported by ARCO, called for the Government to build 50,000 new homes for older people each year to help tackle both the UK's housing and social care crises. It also recommended exempting last-time buyers from stamp duty.

Retirement Living' and member of the Older People's Housing Task Force, has recently called for a classification system to be introduced to grade all homes on their suitability for older people.

Such a system could work in a similar way to the EPC process where trained experts grade buildings. A property graded 'A' would be fully adapted for retirement living; for instance, it wouldn't have staircases but it would have wide doors, walk-in showers, and bathrooms. And perhaps include access to services like a pharmacy or a GP within a five- or 10-minute walk from the property. All properties would also need an EPC of at least band C to ensure energy-efficient heating. The role of grading properties could potentially fall to estate agents, who would receive specialist training and AI could be used to scan floor plans and photos to assess suitability.

A grading scheme would help identify, for house buyers, the suitability of different housing options for later living. If such a scheme was fully implemented, it could cause a shift in the market attracting people to properties that are age-friendly and suitable for later life.

What do you think? Since the start of the year, we've been highlighting examples of policy and practice which could help us adapt to increased longevity. And we've had a great response, with many of you sending us their solutions - thank you. We will collate ideas into a plan for the next Government and launch it at our Future of Ageing Conference on 7 December 2023. So, what do you think? Do you have different or better ideas? Let us know via events@ilcuk.org.uk

LET US KNOW

Housing Taskforce - epic challenges but the force is with them



"The challenges are significant and expectations that the Taskforce will make real progress in addressing them are high. The lack of a level playing field for specialist providers when it comes to planning, the fact that the level of demand isn't always understood and a lack of awareness and understanding among the public of the plethora of options are just a few of the obstacles that the Taskforce Jedi Knights will need to navigate." Remember when the first Star Wars film came out? – a blog by Mario Ambrosi, Anchor and Chair of HAA

With soaring mortgages and increasingly unaffordable rents, the chances of people being able to have a home they can call their own seem even less likely than last November when ILC's Mayhew Review report was published. Although buy-to-let

Population ageing leads to faster increases in some types of households. One-person households, for example, are forecast to rise from 9 million in 2020 to 11 million in 2040, of which a large part will be in older age brackets. More older people living alone in multi-bedroom homes means even fewer first-time buyers getting on the housing ladder and more growing families struggling to move into larger houses. Demographic ageing is not the only factor affecting the market, but what makes it different is that it is predictable and relentless, squeezing supply and feeding into the rise in prices.

The good news is that the creation of the long-awaited Older People's Housing Taskforce is an opportunity for joint work in this area. The Taskforce will report to both the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC), and the Department for Health and Social Care (DHSC).

Feeding into the work of the Taskforce will be the Housing and Ageing Alliance (HAA) which has recently appointed Mario Ambrosi, Director of Communications and Marketing at ILC Partner Anchor, as its new Chair. The Housing and Ageing Alliance is made up of individuals from local and national organisations working together with a single objective; to bring about improvements to the housing and living conditions of older people. And as Mario describes in his recent blog *"Remember when the first Star Wars film came out?"*, the weight of expectation on the Taskforce is of epic proportions and any help from organisations like the HAA should be welcome.

For more information about Housing & Ageing Alliance, visit the HAA webpage and to read Mario's blog click the button below. If you're interested in working with the ILC please contact Paul Goulden, Head of Partnerships.

READ MORE

Affordable, suitable housing - what would you recommend?

"I am delighted to be leading the Taskforce, an opportunity to make a real difference to the lives of older people. Working between housing, health and social care will be critical to its success and I'm looking forward to advising government on proposals that give older people more choices in later life."
Professor Julienne Meyer, Chair



conference. ARCO is the main body representing the Integrated Retirement Community sector in the UK.

The Chair of the Older People's Housing Taskforce, Professor Julienne Meyer CBE, was one of the keynote speakers and set out the Taskforce's aims and progress so far. In particular, the Taskforce was concerned with expanding the provision of affordable, suitable housing for the middle-income market. Given the proximity of the General Election, she said she was keen for the Taskforce to proactively make some recommendations now. The Taskforce's two early recommendations so far are that the Government:

- implements measures to protect consumers from hidden event fees *[i.e. "exit" or "transfer" fees which can be as much as 30% of the property's resale price]*, as soon as possible, based on recommendations developed by the Law Commission in 2017, accepted by government in 2019
- ensures that older people's housing is given due consideration and prominence in the forthcoming revisions of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

As Professor Meyer said these represent relatively low-hanging fruit. Rachael Maclean MP, the Minister of State for Housing & Planning, who also spoke, implied that the Government was likely to accept both of these. That was, however, after the Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities (DLUCH) had considered the 26,000 responses to the NPPF consultation.

The ILC is hoping to feed in further, more ambitious, ideas to the Older People's Housing Taskforce. If you have any views on what the Taskforce should be recommending please let us know via the button below.

LET US KNOW

To keep up-to-date with ILC events throughout the year, please continue to check our website on a regular basis.

Future of Ageing 2023 takes place on Thursday 7 December. If you haven't got your ticket yet, please register here.

Please follow us on social media via the links below for our latest news and event updates.

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