Housing to 2040: consultation on outline policy options

28th February 2020

Q1	**Earlier this year we published our draft vision and principles. A short and longer version are available here: https://www.gov.scot/publications/housing-to-2040/. Do you have any comments on the draft vision and principles? *Please be specific and identify what you would change and why.***
	Scottish Care are supportive of the draft vision and principles. We are pleased to see the specific reference to older adults and the challenges that an ageing population face in terms of housing needs.
	As our population is living longer, it is expected that by 2039, the number of people over 65 will increase by 44%, leading to an increased demand for adult social care. Therefore, it is critical that housing policy cannot be considered on its own without increased connection with health and social care policy, particularly around the policy drivers to support people not only to live longer, but to live well in their own homes or a homely setting for as long as possible. In order to meaningfully support positive population wellbeing, housing, health and social care have to be more effectively joined up in national and local planning processes.
	An estimated minimum of 230,117 people received social care in 2017/2018, all of whom will be accessing a form of housing or adaptations on the housing they currently inhabit. Living in the right home with the right support is essential for older adults and those accessing social care to be able to live fulfilled and thriving lives. For this to happen, the significant challenges around health and social care support in certain areas of Scotland need to be adequately addressed in a local partnership approach. The end result requires housing stock and options to be supportive and conducive to the challenges facing the population.

Q3	Do you have any proposals that would increase the **affordability** of housing in the future? *The Scottish social care sector is a critical sector not only in terms of the support it provides but by nature of the fact it is the 8th biggest employment sector in terms of number of jobs in Scotland. However, this is a low-paid workforce who often need to work in inner city, remote and rural settings where there is a significant gap between wages and the cost of housing. There is a need to recognise the link between affordability with regards to house prices and high rental costs which is exacerbated in particualrareas. For example. the rising costs of privately renting in cities such as Edinburgh in comparison with the rate of pay for those working in the sector means that households are having to make cut backs on essential items to cover the cost of their rising rent costs. This leads people into poverty, debt and is detrimental to their overall wellbeing.* *Significant consideration also needs to be given to single person households and the forecasted smaller working age population; all of which will affect the longevity and affordability of housing. Comprehensive rent controls tied to quality and affordability rather than the market, similar to past proposals, are key to protecting tenants from an exploitative housing market." The affordability of housing needs to be realistically examined so that it does not deter people from working within the social care sector and also detrimentally affect household budgets and overall health of those within these households.*
Q4	Do you have any proposals that would increase the **accessibility and/or functionality** of existing and new housing (for example, for older and disabled people)? *Housing proposals need to take into account the ageing demographics of the population, their care and support needs and enable people to remain in their own homes for as long as reasonably practicable. Research by Age Scotland identified more than 60% of older people own their own home and 48% of people aged 55 and above would prefer to stay and adapt their own homes. Some 26% would prefer to move to a home more suitable to their needs as they get older. Therefore, housing stock and options for both private residential properties and care homes should be suitable for those living with a range of needs and wishes.* *Any housing policy needs to take account of good practice and design guidelines for people living with dementia and the increasing number of people living with life-*

limiting conditions. Current research should be used to inform the development and implementation of the housing policy, such as the "Housing through the lens of Ageing: Integration, Communication and Community, an analysis of the Age Scotland Housing Project", which has been co-produced by Age Scotland and the University of Stirling and aims to constructively progress the thinking, debate and practice of the role of housing in the quality of life of older people by analysing housing research data gathered via a national housing roadshow and survey. It acknowledges the recommendations on six key areas: strategic planning, information and advice, adaptations, housing with care or support, preventative support and new housing. Furthermore, it is imperative that all those involved in the house building sectors appreciate that there is an inadequacy of current builds which are both single level and accessible.

The positive impact of technology cannot be denied in supporting people to remain independent for as long as possible. Technology is developing at an exceedingly fast rate with various goods and services available to maintain a person's independence in the shape of emergency call buttons, smart meters and other assistive technologies. It should be made clear that technology in itself is not a total solution and must never entirely replace human interaction and care. However, technology should be recognised, harnessed and integrated into any future housing proposals regarding functionality and promoting independence. Scottish Care would wish to promote a citizen-led, human rights- based approach to the use of technology in accessible housing provision. We would also want to ensure that the use of such technologies assist in addressing the major issue of health inequalities rather than by default serve to increase or consolidate these.

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Q5	Do you have any proposals that would help us respond to the global climate emergency by **increasing the energy efficiency and warmth and lowering the carbon emissions** of existing and new housing?
Q6	Do you have any proposals that would improve the **quality, standards and state of repair** of existing and new housing?
Q7	**Do you have any proposals that would improve the space around our homes and promote connected places and vibrant communities?** *Scottish Care agree that a whole systems approach is key to enable an inclusive approach to the planning, design and building of appropriate housing. Housing should be made inclusive to all needs so there is less need for adaptations if a person develops an illness or a health problem and also makes possible the Government's policy to keep those who want to stay in their own home for longer.*

	Housing must be designed to support positive wellbeing, including through addressing challenges such as social isolation and loneliness which can particularly impact older people. *The development of existing and new housing models that encourage community connectedness in the shape of care homes, care villages and inter-generational spaces can support this. To do this there is a need to have public engagement around decision making, working with local partners in the design and development of new housing investments that are suitable for the local community. This includes the public sector working with the independendant third sectors to ensuring any new developments are assessed with the local needs and infrastructure in mind such as health and social care supports, hospitals, GP surgeries, schools and other community services.*
Q8	Any other comments?
	Scottish Care is committed through its members to ensuring that there is a growth in adequate supported housing accommodation to enable individuals to live as independently as possible for as long as possible. We would like to see further encouragement to ensure that residential and care home provision is located in the heart and centre of our communities. In particular, we consider, there is a challenge to ensuring that provision within urban and city areas is enhanced so that older citizens may be able to locate home, community, commerce and relaxation in the one physical environment. Inter-generational living and housing should be a priority for design and build to ensure our communities remain as connected and as inclusive as possible. We look forward to seeing the collaborative efforts to take this important work forward so that older people in Scotland can live safe, healthy and independent lives for as long as possible.