



Coalition urges Prime Minister: Make UK a World Leader in Housing-with-Care

- **“New consensus amongst charities, investors, cross-party Parliamentarians and older people’s advocates that 2020s need must be decade of housing-with-care”**
- **New models of care to complement traditional forms of care delivery**
- **Unique opportunity to transform healthy ageing, reduce pressure on NHS and tackle loneliness**

A coalition of more than thirty charities, older people’s representatives, policymakers, academics, and private sector and civil society leaders has today urged the Prime Minister to take immediate action to expand new options that sit between the traditional care solutions of care homes, and receiving care at home – with there now being “a new consensus that the 2020s need to be the decade of housing-with-care”.

The open letter’s signatories include MPs and Peers from the Conservative, Labour, Liberal Democrat and SNP parties and the crossbench group, and leaders from organisations as diverse as Age UK, Legal & General, the British Property Federation, the Campaign to End Loneliness and the County Councils Network, as well as the country’s largest not-for-profit providers of care and support for older people.

In a rare sign of agreement in the often contentious debate on social care reform, the coalition point out that “just as previous decades saw the expansion of the care home and home care sectors, there is now a new consensus that the 2020s need to be the decade of housing with care”. This young but growing sector goes beyond traditional sheltered housing and combines independent living for older people with the provision of onsite, CQC-registered care, support, and a wide range of communal services and facilities. The sector has successfully shielded older people during the Covid-19 pandemic, improves the health, wellbeing and social connection of residents, and reduces pressure on the NHS by cutting down GP and hospital visits.

These benefits are being recognised by a growing number of older people, with a recent survey of housing-with-care operators finding that 85% had experienced a significant rise in interest compared to the same point last year. Despite this, just 0.6% of over-65s in the UK currently have the opportunity to live in a housing-with-care development, compared to at least 5-6% in New Zealand, Australia and the US.

To meet the changing needs of older people, the letter says that while “proposals for social care *funding* reform have now been pushed back until next year, we say that expanding social care *provision* must start now”. This could be done at low-cost, say the coalition, through the formation of a new task force which brings together different Government departments and is able to “join up planning policy, funding (for those with moderate means) and a regulatory framework” to safeguard older people’s interests.

This would pave the way to achieve the Vision 2030 goals of the sector’s representative body, ARCO (Associated Retirement Community Operators), which aims for 250,000 older people to live in housing-with-care by the end of the decade.

The full list of the letter’s signatories are:

Parliamentarians

Rt Hon Damian Green MP (Conservatives)

Rosie Cooper MP (Labour)

Lord Shipley (LibDem)



Lord Best (Crossbench)
Lord Foulkes of Cumnock (Labour)
Dr Lisa Cameron MP (SNP)
Lord Cormack (Conservatives)
Lord Alton (Crossbench)
Lord Bird (Crossbench)
Bob Blackman MP (Conservatives)
Baroness Blackstone (Independent Labour)
Siobhain McDonagh MP (Labour)

Researchers & academics

Baroness Sally Greengross, Chief Executive, International Longevity Centre UK
Professor Les Mayhew, the Business School (formerly Cass) and Head of Research at International Longevity Centre UK
Dr James Brown, Aston Research Centre for Healthy Ageing
Judy Martin, Chair, Global Ageing Network
Sir Muir Gray, Visiting Professor, Nuffield Department of Primary Care Health Sciences, University of Oxford and Director, Oxford Optimal Ageing Programme

Trade associations

Melanie Leech, Chief Executive, British Property Federation
Jane Townson, Chief Executive, UK Homecare Association
Professor Martin Green, Chief Executive, Care England
Vic Rayner, Executive Director, National Care Forum
Kate Henderson, Chief Executive, National Housing Federation
Cllr David Fothergill, Adult Social Care Spokesman, County Councils Network
Nick Sanderson, Chair, Associated Retirement Community Operators (ARCO)
Jeremy Porteus, Chief Executive, Housing Learning and Improvement Network
Huw Edwards, CEO, UKActive

Organisations representing the interests of older people

Caroline Abrahams, Charity Director, Age UK
Judy Downey, Chair, Relatives and Residents Association
Paul Cann OBE, Co-founder, Campaign to End Loneliness
Deborah Alsina MBE, Chief Executive, Independent Age
Lisa Ray, General Secretary, Civil Service Pensioners' Alliance
Eamonn Donaghy, CEO, National Federation of Occupational Pensioners
Steve Edwards, CEO of the National Association of Retired Police Officers
Stephen Burke, Director, United for All Ages

Charities delivering services to older people

Jane Ashcroft CBE, Chief Executive, Anchor Hanover Group
Mick Laverty, Chief Executive, Extra Care Charitable Trust
Sam Monaghan, Chief Executive, Methodist Homes for the Aged
Bruce Moore, Chief Executive, Housing 21
John Galvin, Chief Executive, Elderly Accommodation Counsel (EAC)
Steve Allen, Chief Executive, Friends of the Elderly

Health & social care infrastructure investors



Nigel Wilson, Chief Executive, Legal & General
Justin Travlos, Country Head UK & Ireland, AXA Investment Management

Rt Hon Damian Green MP, Chair of the All Party Group for Longevity, said:

“Creating cross-party consensus on social care reform is one of the most urgent priorities facing this country, and coming together to expand the housing-with-care sector must play a central part in this.

“To bring housing-with-care to the fore of political attention, and to foster collaboration between different Government departments to achieve real change, we need the swift formation of a Housing-with-Care Task Force.

“This is not a party political point – it is about doing what is right for the future livelihoods of older people in this country.”

Nick Sanderson, Chair of ARCO (Associated Retirement Community Operators), said:

“When it comes to social care, it is clear that more of the same is not going to suffice. Alongside care homes and homecare, we need to quickly expand the housing-with-care options available to older people, so they can live independently while having access to the best care and support. The Covid-19 crisis has only made this more urgent.

“We know that finding a solution to the social care funding question has been pushed back to next year, but the expansion of social care provision must start now. The Government can take the low-cost yet transformative step of forming a Housing-with-Care Task Force that removes the barriers on the sector’s growth and re-shapes our social care landscape for generations to come.”

Baroness Sally Greengross, Chief Executive of the International Longevity Centre UK, said:

“The research on our ageing population is clear: while longevity brings huge challenges, it also represents a golden opportunity to transform society so that our increasing number of years alive are spent in good health.

“At the centre of this transformation needs to be a reconceptualisation of how we care for and support older people, so that our social care system more closely matches different levels of need, and enables people to make the most of their extra years.

“Housing-with-care is an exciting new model for supporting older generations that the Government must urgently help to expand through the formation of a new task force.”

Professor Les Mayhew - the Business School (formerly Cass) and Head of Research at ILC-UK:

“The overwhelming evidence is that we have nowhere near enough retirement housing to meet the needs of our ageing population, especially housing with care.

“Many older people are interested in downsizing but the lack of supply prevents the freeing up of under-occupied family homes that would hugely benefit younger generations including first time buyers.

“Unblocking the current log jam must be a priority if we are to solve the housing crisis and meet the social care needs of an ageing population.



“A cross-government task force to help break down the institutional barriers would be win-win for us all: the young, old and everyone in between.”

Phil Bayliss, CEO of Later Living at Legal & General, said:

“The UK has millions of people who are suffering severe loneliness, many of which have immediate care needs and are suffering health issues because of where they live.

“L&G have the capital and the will to foster a thriving housing with care sector to improve the way we age as a society. It is time for the government to dedicate real resource and focus to tackling the barriers holding back growth and enable investors to play their full part in driving lasting change.”

Judy Downey, Chair of the Residents and Relatives Association, said:

“Enhancing and enlarging the choices available to older people must be at the heart of a better social care system, which is why we need an expanded supply of housing-with-care to complement existing options.

“Older age should also be a time of exploring new talents and interests, maintaining health and well-being, building social connections and so much more. As well as providing high quality care and support, housing and care options must give older people more opportunities to live life to the full, as well as providing peace of mind to relatives who are too often presented with unsatisfactory and limited options.

“But we will not achieve this without urgent action now – starting with cross-government collaboration to boost housing-with-care.”

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For Further Information Please Contact

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Notes to editors

1. About ARCO: Founded in 2012, ARCO (Associated Retirement Community Operators) is the principle body representing both private and not-for-profit operators of housing-with-care schemes in the UK. ARCO’s members aim to provide housing and care solutions to an additional 150,000 people over the next 10 years. We work in three distinct areas, each vital in supporting our Members and growing the sector that helps people to live independently for longer.

- **Setting the Policy Agenda:** delivered through policy campaigning work with MPs, Peers, Government Ministers, Local Authorities and other key sector stakeholders to influence the future of much-needed sector specific legislation.
- **Compliance & Regulation:** delivered through our Consumer Code and standards framework, with continual assessments of Members to drive high standards for customer and resident experience.

Knowledge Sharing and Best Practice: delivered through our extensive events programme, annual What Next? Conference, Network bulletins, online knowledge Bank, and



ARCO Analytics.

- 2. About Retirement Communities/housing-with-care:** Retirement Communities sit in between traditional retirement houses (which have less extensive staffing and leisure facilities), and care homes, and can be set in urban or suburban locations. There is a growing body of evidence which shows that Retirement Communities keep older people healthy, well and independent for longer – reducing the overall level of care they need and keeping them out of care homes and hospitals. Currently about 77,000 people live in Retirement Communities in the UK but this number is set to grow to 250,000 people by the end of the decade. Retirement Communities are the fastest growing form of social care provision in the UK – with demand significantly exceeding current supply. Typically consisting of individual one or two bedroom flats or houses, located in a development with similar properties, residents have access to a range of services and facilities, which will include optional on-site care, 24-hour staffing, and dining and leisure facilities, and may also include bars, gyms and craft rooms. Retirement Communities are also sometimes referred to as housing-with-care schemes, retirement villages, extra care housing, assisted living, or close care apartments.
- 3. The benefits of Housing-with-Care:** Housing-with-care has shown during the outbreak that it can help residents to self-isolate independently. A particular advantage of this form of retirement provision is that residents can access the highest levels of support from staff through care, meals, regular phone check-ins and a wide range of online activities. More broadly, housing-with-care brings a range of great benefits to older people and our country as a whole:

 - **Delivering savings to the social care system:** Providing social care for those with lower-level needs costs £1,222 (17.8%) less per person per year, and for those with higher-level needs £4,556 (26%) less than in other care settings.
 - **Boosting health and the NHS:** By improving the physical and mental health of residents, costs like GP, nurse and hospital visits reduce by 38%. £5.6bn in cost savings will be made for health and social care if 250,000 over-65s live in housing-with-care by 2030
 - **Freeing up family homes:** 562,000 bedrooms will be released to the market for all generations if the sector achieves its 2030 growth targets.
 - **Efficient use of land:** Apartments for older people are built using up to six times less space than family homes.
 - **Tackling loneliness:** Residents are five times as likely as non-residents to participate in social events, and four times as likely to get together with friends.

These benefits have been clearly demonstrated during the coronavirus outbreak. The provision of care, meals and support onsite has played a key role in keeping residents well and healthy. Housing-with-care has been central to cutting hospital admissions, reducing strain on the NHS and providing crucial step-down capacity once people could leave hospital.

- 4. Our call for a Housing-with-Care Task Force:** The coronavirus pandemic has shone a light on our social care system and forced us to reflect on the fact that we need to develop new models of care. There is a huge gap in the current social care landscape for housing and care options that sit between care homes, and people receiving care in homes that may no longer suit their needs. For older people without acute care needs, the UK needs to grow the provision of models that enable them to live independently for as long as possible: with onsite care and support if needed, boosting health and wellbeing, reducing pressure on the NHS and strengthening social connection.



That's why ARCO is calling for the swift establishment of a cross-government Housing-with-Care Task Force to accelerate the growth of the housing-with-care sector. Backed by a range of high-profile supporters, we believe a Task Force is the best mechanism through which barriers to growth can be identified, and recommendations for change made. Only by working together can we establish new options that compliment and extend the existing social care landscape in the UK.