



Cross-party alliance calls for more housing-with-care

A high profile group of MPs, Lords, charity leaders and business leaders have publicly declared their support for the UK's fast growing Retirement Community sector.

The group, which includes MPs and Peers from five political parties and groups has publicly backed calls for the UK Retirement Community sector to nearly quadruple in size by 2030 to 250,000 people.

The sector already accounts for 75% of all projected growth in the UK's supply of specialist housing for older people from 2024 onwards. It is now aiming to double this projected output during the course of the next decade, to help tackle the housing shortage and the challenges facing the health and social care systems in the UK.

High profile political backers include former Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, the Rt Hon Damian Green MP (Conservative), Co-Chair of the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Adult Social Care, Eleanor Smith MP (Labour), Liberal Democrat Spokesperson for Housing, Lord Shipley (LD), respected cross-bench peer Baroness Sally Greengross (CB) and Jim Shannon MP (DUP).

They are joined by key charitable leaders such as Jane Ashcroft (Chief Executive of Anchor Hanover) and Steve Allen (Chief Executive of Friends of the Elderly.)

Backers from the world of business include David Hynam (Chief Executive of Bupa UK), Phil Bayliss (Legal & General's CEO of Later Living, and Nick Sanderson (Chief Executive of Audley Group.)

Retirement Communities combine high quality housing options for older people with tailored support services. They allow residents to rent or own a property and to maintain their privacy and independence, with the reassurance of 24-hour on-site staff, communal facilities, and optional care and support as needed.

Retirement Communities are also sometimes referred to as retirement villages, extra care housing, housing-with-care, assisted living, close care apartments, or independent living settings.

As a sector, Retirement Community operators are committed to housing 250,000 older people by 2030, up from 75,000 today. Output is projected to reach 7,500 by 2024 and to exceed 15,000 before the end of that decade.

Michael Voges, Executive Director of ARCO said:

“Retirement Communities offer older people a great lifestyle, stability, security and a chance to age well in their own homes. Onsite 24-hour support means that people are healthier for longer, thereby reducing the strain on social services and the NHS. They also free up larger family homes which might otherwise have been under-occupied.

“Our sector has very significant growth ambitions, and will account for the overwhelming majority of new supply of specialist housing in the coming years. The support of so many high profile public figures shows the momentum this sector is developing is huge. This group will play a key role in helping to achieve this growth and ensuring that its focus remains on the health, wellbeing, housing and interests of residents.”



The Rt Hon Damian Green MP said:

“This country lags far behind others in the provision of specialist housing for older people. As a result not only are people living in unsuitable homes, but the housing market itself is made less fluid.”

Eleanor Smith MP said:

“This is the version of elderly care I want for everyone. I would want this across all communities and be available throughout our society at all economic levels. It should be the standard that everyone can get. “

Lord Shipley said:

“Helping older people to downsize to attractive homes with personal support must be a key part of the Government’s planning to solve the housing shortage and our crisis in social care.”

Baroness Sally Greengross said:

“Retirement Communities are a wonderful option for older people seeking high quality housing, care and support.

“Having worked with ARCO for a number of years I am delighted at the increasing political interest in this sector.

“A concerted effort is needed to help increase supply in the UK to bring us up to international standards – and to make the lives of hundreds of thousands of older people better.”

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

“With over three million over 60s in the UK seeking to downsize their homes and only 7,000 housing with care properties being build each year we see a significant investment opportunity in the later living sector. Through our long-term investment in this sector we will play a significant role in delivering the scale of supply that’s needed.

“The support of this alliance is most welcome; it will be integral to the delivery of more homes in what is currently the most underserved sector in the housing market.”

Jane Ashcroft, Chief Executive of Anchor Hanover said:

“Retirement Communities providing support and flexible care have a huge role to play in older people’s health, social care and housing in the UK.

“One of the strengths of our system is that provision is in place for those with limited means – though we can definitely go further here. We also want to widen access to older people in the ‘middle market’, and to ensure that housing with care is an integral part of the health and social care system in the UK. We know that the demand is out there – we just need to overcome the obstacles which are stopping charities like ours and investors from expanding as we’d like.”

Nick Sanderson, Chief Executive of Audley Group said:

“Retirement Communities are – rightly – taking up their own distinct place in the housing, health and social care landscape. This sector has always been about more than bricks and mortar, and it’s fantastic to see the momentum and support build when it comes to a focus on long term service delivery.”



The current list of Vision 2030 Supporters is as follows:

Steve Allen, Chief Executive, Friends of the Elderly
Jane Ashcroft, Chief Executive, Anchor Hanover
Phil Bayliss, CEO of Later Living at Legal & General
Bob Blackman MP
Glyn Davies MP
Leo Docherty MP
Baroness Gardner of Parkes
The Rt Hon Damian Green MP
Baroness Greengross
David Hynam, Chief Executive, Bupa UK
Mick Laverty, Chief Executive, ExtraCare Charitable Trust
Chandra McGowan, Chief Executive, Whiteley Village Trust
The Rt Hon Andrew Mitchell MP
Bruce Moore, Chief Executive, Housing 21
Jeremy Porteus, Managing Director, HousingLIN
Nick Sanderson, Chief Executive, Audley Group
Jim Shannon MP
Lord Shipley
Eleanor Smith MP
Lord Tebbit
Derek Thomas MP
Giles Watling MP
David Williams, Chief Executive, St Monica Trust

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For Further Information Please Contact

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Notes to editors

- 1. About ARCO:** ARCO (the Associated Retirement Community Operators) is the trade association for operators of housing-with-care developments for older people. ARCO was founded in 2012, and is now comprised of 27 private and not-for-profit operators of Retirement Communities. ARCO represents approximately 50% of the Retirement Community sector. ARCO sets high standards, and all ARCO members must adhere to the externally assessed ARCO Consumer Code. ARCO does not represent the traditional retirement housing model where there are limited services and no care is available or care homes.
- 2. About Retirement Communities:** Retirement Communities typically consist 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. They sit in between traditional retirement houses (which have less extensive staffing and leisure facilities), and care homes, and can be in urban or suburban locations.



3. About Vision 2030: Vision 2030 is ARCO's vision for 250,000 people to be living in retirement communities by 2030. The vision sets out ten areas of work for the sector in order to achieve this. These are:

- Development of a clear customer proposition
- Effective self-regulation
- Enhanced health and wellbeing
- Intelligent use of technology
- Flexible models of tenure
- Sustainable funding streams
- Sector-specific legislation
- Comprehensive and robust data
- Clarity in the planning system
- A highly trained workforce

For more information on Vision 2030, please contact Gareth Lyon, Head of Policy and Communications, at garethlyon@arcouk.org.

4. Benefits of Retirement Communities:

- *Meeting the needs of an ageing population:* Older people need and want choice in their housing for later life. However, at present housing options for older people are limited. Retirement Communities are an important element of housing choice for older people. Developing the capacity of the Retirement Community sector is vital to ensuring that the UK's housing market is fit to meet the needs of an ageing population.
- *Promoting independence, security and wellbeing:* Older people living in Retirement Communities are likely to experience lower levels of loneliness and social isolation. [A 2014 study](#) by the International Longevity Centre found that 82% of respondents in Retirement Communities said they hardly or never felt isolated, and only 1% often felt isolated.
- *Reducing costs and encouraging more efficient use of resources:* Residents in Retirement Communities are able to receive specialist care in their homes if needed, enabling them to return home from hospital earlier. They are also less likely to enter hospital. For example, one way in which Retirement Communities improve health is by preventing falls. Retirement Community properties are designed and built with adaptations to support independence and research shows that those living in these specialist homes are between 1.5 and 2.8 times less likely to have a fall than those living in homes without adaptations. This helps to reduce pressure on NHS services. [A recent study](#) found that NHS costs were reduced by 38% for those moving into Retirement Community housing and NHS costs for 'frail' residents had reduced by 51.5% after 12 months.
- *Responding to the housing shortage:* Older people moving to a Retirement Community will typically 'downsize', freeing up much needed and under-occupied family sized homes. If all those interested in moving into a retirement property were able to do so, [research](#) suggests that approximately 3.29 million properties would be released, including nearly 2 million three-bedroom homes.