

# A Housing Manifesto: Key messages from older people

*'[Older] people see housing as... the most essential factor in whether they will be able to manage and live well'<sup>(1)</sup>*

- 90% of older people live in general housing
- 30% of all homes are lived in by older people
- 70% of older people are home owners

Care & Repair England has asked older people across the country what is important about housing in older age. This leaflet summarises the key messages...



*"To be able to remain in your own home, without being pressured to move"*



*"We need homes with easy access into, out of and around them"*




*Warmth, safety and security are key priorities"*

In debates about the implications of an ageing society, housing is all too often an afterthought. However, practical housing help and homes designed for people of all ages are key to living independently and well in older age.



*“Homes should be within easy reach of basic facilities - shopping, transport etc”*



*“Choice, support and a variety of housing is needed - older people are all different”*



*“Housing in older age should enable independent living”*

## Key Message

***Ensure that older people have access to fast, affordable help with home repairs and adaptations.***

### Why?

- Many of the common chronic health conditions have a causal link to housing. These include heart disease, strokes, mental health, respiratory conditions, arthritis and rheumatism <sup>(1)</sup>
- There are 7.7 million non-decent homes: 5.3 million are owner occupied <sup>(2)</sup>
- The likelihood of living in poor housing is higher for people who live in the private sector, are over 75 years old, single women, BME elders, and/or have lived in the same home for more than 25 years <sup>(2)</sup>
- Half of low income households are homeowners but receive just a fraction of the government money spent on housing support <sup>(3)</sup>

## Key Message

***Design homes and neighbourhoods to enable older people to live independently and play an active role in the community. Apply Lifetime Homes Standards to all new homes as a starting point.***

### Why?

- Older people will account for half of the increase in households by 2026 <sup>(1)</sup>
- 1.4 million people report having a medical condition or disability that requires specially adapted accommodation <sup>(2)</sup>
- One in five of those aged 50 and over, and 2 in 5 of those aged 80 and over, reported difficulties with one or more aspects of basic self care – eg. washing and dressing <sup>(3)</sup>
- Falls are one of the major causes of death and health decline amongst older people and there is a causal link between environmental conditions and falls <sup>(4)</sup>
- Most older people wish to remain living active, independent lives as part of the wider community <sup>(5)</sup>

(1) CLG (2008) Lifetime Homes, Lifetime Neighbourhoods, London: CLG

(2) CLG (Annual – 2007 data) Survey of English Housing, London: CLG

(3) Institute for Fiscal Studies (2002). English Longitudinal Study of Ageing. London: IFS

(4) Various – WHO, RoSPA, Heywood F et al

(5) Various – WHO, Audit Commission, CLG et al

***“Older people need plenty of room so it is easier to move around”***



***“Lifetime Homes? Will they be built in my lifetime?”***

## Key messages from older people about housing in older age

### ■ **Enable older people to live independently in their own homes**

- Homes that are safe, secure & warm
- Practical help with repairs, maintenance, adaptations and low cost equity release
- Access to public transport, shops and facilities
- Impartial information and advice

### ■ **Design homes for all ages**

- Homes that are accessible, easy to move around in and which enable independent living
- Homes with enough space - with storage and room to have friends and family to visit and stay
- Homes that enable us to stay part of the community, living and socialising with people of all ages
- Variety of housing options for all stages of older age

### ■ **Involve older people in designing and planning homes and services**



*“Help for older people who wish to stay put and for those who want to move somewhere smaller”*



### What is Care & Repair England?

Care & Repair England is a national charity established in 1986 to improve the housing and living conditions of older and disabled people. Its aim is to innovate, develop, promote and support housing policies and initiatives which enable older and disabled people to live independently in their homes for as long as they wish.

### Contact us

Care & Repair England, The Renewal Trust Business Centre, 3, Hawksworth Street, Nottingham, NG3 2EG [info@careandrepair-england.org.uk](mailto:info@careandrepair-england.org.uk) Tel: 0115 950 6500 [www.careandrepair-england.org.uk](http://www.careandrepair-england.org.uk)

Care & Repair England is an Industrial and Provident Society with Charitable Status Reg. No. 25121R