



Consultation Paper on a New Planning Policy Statement 3 (PPS3) Housing

Comments Submitted to the ODPM
By Care & Repair England

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1. About Care & Repair England

1.1. Care & Repair England is a national charity established in 1986 to improve the housing and living conditions of older and disabled people.

1.2. 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.

1.3. The main focus of Care & Repair England is housing for older people in private sector housing. Our comments are primarily about the implications of this paper for the housing of this growing sector of the population.

2. Basis of our Response

2.1. One element of our work has been to develop and enable local older people's groups to more effectively express their housing needs and aspirations at a local level and to identify shortcomings in the current provision of housing for an ageing population.

2.2. We have worked with local authorities and older people to shape local housing strategies and older people's strategies which are rooted in the everyday experience of older people.

2.3. We undertook specific project entitled 'Should I Stay or Should I Go' which aimed to enable older people to make an informed choice about moving to more suitable housing in older age.

2.4. Through this programme and the 8 pilot services operating in very different parts of England we identified a significant lack of suitable housing for an ageing population and a real lack of local housing options.

3. Comment on the Consultation Paper

3.1. We are extremely concerned by the lack of reference to demographic trends and the serious implications of this social change for future housing supply and demand.

3.2. There is no reference to assessment of the housing needs and aspirations of an ageing population as being a key market driving force. Older people are not mentioned, with the exception of one very limited reference to older people in Annex B, para 4, alongside minority sections of the population such as gypsies and travellers.

3.3. Older people are hardly a small minority. Even today:

- 30% of all households are headed by a person of 60 or over – and this is set to increase.
- 90% of older people live in general housing stock.
- 71% of households are now owner occupied – 84% amongst the newly retired in rural areas.
- Half of all poor householders are now owner occupiers.

- One of the major social changes of the last 20 years has been growth of owner occupation amongst lower income groups and many of those households are now approaching retirement, with the consequent issues about affordable alternative housing as they get older.

3.4. Our key point is that PPS3 must clearly state that all planning decisions must be made within the context of the current and future demographic trends

3.5. Without this acknowledgement of a major force in housing markets and new area of housing demand the policy will not be effective in delivering a sustainable housing supply or an inclusive environment for the wider community.

3.6. It is essential to create 'future-proofed' housing and wider environment which will meet the needs of future generations.

3.7. Any equality impact assessment has to also ensure that development proposals are 'age proofed', and fully address the ageing profile of the population.