



NEWS RELEASE

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Housing and Older People: Beware Distractions of Fringe Schemes

National older people's housing charity, Care & Repair England ⁽¹⁾ has welcomed Housing Minister Grant Shapps' comments ⁽²⁾ about older people being in control of where they live, whilst cautioning against promoting headline grabbing initiatives with limited wider applicability.

"We are delighted to hear the Minister say that older people should be the ones to decide where and how they live", said Sue Adams, CEO of Care & Repair England. "It is also heartening to see recognition of how important independent, impartial advice, such as FirstStop, is in making such choices. This is what older people across the country tell us that they need in order to make an informed decision ⁽³⁾."

The charity expressed some concerns about the Minister encouraging local councils to replicate small scale initiatives with very limited evidence of wider applicability, rather than encouraging authorities to focus on the majority.

"Most older people are just fine living where they are, with a modest number needing a some help with odd jobs, repairs, tasks around the home and adaptations ⁽⁵⁾. A minority choose to move, or would do so if there were good local options available", said Adams. "Local councils would be well advised to ensure that they had strategies in place to address these larger scale issues first."

Care & Repair England has recently expressed grave concerns about significant local funding cuts to housing related support for older people, including home repair, adaptation and advice services.

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Notes Ctd overleaf.....

Editor's notes

1. Care & Repair England is a national charity set up in 1986 by Shelter and the Housing Associations' Charitable Trust (hact) to improve the housing and living conditions of older and disabled people, particularly for those living in poor quality private sector housing, thereby enabling them to 'stay put' in their own homes in greater comfort and security.
2. DCLG News Release <http://www.communities.gov.uk/news/corporate/2067493>
3. A third of all homes are lived in by older people, 90% of older people living in general housing whilst 75% of older people are now owner occupiers. Older people's views about housing summarised in www.careandrepair-england.org.uk/pdf/kmfop_aug_09.pdf
4. Care & Repair England analysed the scale of poor housing in its report *A Perfect Storm: An ageing population, low income home ownership, and decay of older housing* http://www.careandrepair-england.org.uk/pdf/a_perfect_storm_nov_10.pdf

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