

This response is provided by members of the ESRC-funded Centre for Care at the University of Sheffield and The UK Collaborative Centre for Housing Evidence (CaCHE), a consortium of eight institutions led by the University of Glasgow. It also draws on recent work in the Sustainable Care programme.

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1) What are the most important issues the task force should seek to address?

- Effective coordination of housing and social care policy is key to enabling people to 'age in place,' older people's decisions hinge as much on the availability of care and support as on the quality of their homes.
- Enforcing the Care Act 2014's wellbeing duties by assessing people's housing needs to ensure their living accommodation is suitable. Development of effective housing-related information and advice and organisation of delivery of care and support in an integrated way that connects local authorities, housing providers and other partners.
- Tackling the 'care deserts' that have emerged in parts of the country, where inadequate planning and weaknesses in supply of services and workers mean older people cannot access residential or home care (even when they can afford to pay for this). This is already forcing some to move away from family, friends, and community.
- Address the emerging evidence that older people from social minority groups are being discriminated against within housing with care schemes (HCS), negatively impacting their wellbeing and increasing isolation and loneliness. Housing must be safe, free from discrimination ([CaCHE](#), 2022, Kilkey, et al. 2020).

2) Do you have specific recommendations for the taskforce to consider?

For the taskforce:

- Recognise that people's housing and care needs intersect, and address this specifically.
- Consider the growing demands placed on unpaid carers, especially women, and how this relates to housing options.
- Promote and commission innovative models that adopt a preventative approach in both home care and extra care housing ([Sustainable Care Policy Perspectives](#), 2018).
- Explore effective practice in bringing together all partners involved in people's housing and care, promoting these widely to overcome silo working and support integration.

National Government:

- **Invest sufficient resources** to implement the Care Act, tackle the care workforce crisis and eradicate 'care deserts.'
- Reinstate the [£300m Housing Transformation Fund](#) (an original commitment in '[People at the Heart of Care](#)'), and invest significantly in integrating housing into local health and care strategies.
- Identify examples of Integrated Care Systems that are involving social care and housing partners effectively and spread this approach.

Local authorities:

- Promote SCIE's [principles](#) of excellence in housing with care and support.
- Ensure Care Act assessments routinely consider the role housing plays in promoting wellbeing, including services that support companionship, engagement and prevention ([Sustainable Care Policy Perspectives](#), 2018).
- Work in partnership with the wider community to offer person-centred support and provide housing options which reflect local needs ([Needham et al.](#), 2020).

Products

1) What are the most important issues the task force should seek to address?

- **Implementation and uptake of technologies with the potential to [support older people in the home](#) is much too slow.** Accelerate this as a priority in housing with extra care, new forms of assistive technology, at-home monitoring and coordinated care planning, **recognising that poor connectivity in rural areas** is a major factor hindering progress.
- **Develop effective assessment, installation and maintenance systems to support use of technologies in care**, recognising the importance of wraparound services and the human responses that are key to [making technology 'care'](#).
- Alongside scrapping the £300 million commitment, made in [People at the Heart of Care \(2021\)](#), to integrate housing into local health and care strategies, the £150 million commitment to drive greater adoption of technology and achieve widespread digitisation across social care has been [reduced](#) to £100 million.
- **Tackle the age-related 'digital divide' in access to, and skills in using, technology**, recognising the [essential role](#) the community and voluntary sector plays in promoting digital inclusion.
- **Recognise that home care providers need support to embrace new technologies, and develop** the infrastructure needed to roll out digital technologies. Identify new ways of transferring knowledge between health and social care services and local authorities.

2) Do you have specific recommendations for the taskforce to consider?

For the taskforce:

- **Work with home care providers and workers to develop the training**, support and skills needed to integrate new technologies into provision of care and support in different housing contexts.
- Identify and promote innovative models of **using technology that are effective in delivering high quality support in people's homes**.

National Government:

- **Deliver on the vision in *People at the Heart of Care***, including funding to support information, advice, and advocacy services specific to housing and digital technology.
- **Develop a defined communication strategy to increase awareness of the potential of digital technology and housing** for people with care and support needs, unpaid carers, the care workforce, and care commissioners.
- Ensure providers, local authorities and community organisations have adequate resources to ensure smooth delivery of support during the analogue to digital switchover.

Local authorities:

- **Produce standards for technology and housing with care and support**, specifying what people should be able to expect.
- **Address infrastructure issues preventing the roll out of digital technologies**, especially in rural communities.
- **Create opportunities to learn from other local authorities and their experiences of embedding technology-enabled support.**
- **Promote [resources](#) developed by the TEC Action Alliance**

Place

1. What are the most important issues the task force should seek to address?

- **Prioritise tackling the housing quality crisis** identified in the [national framework for housing improvement](#).
- **Recognise that population ageing requires an increase, not a reduction, in the supply of new specialist housing.**
- **Address the unacceptable situation of over [2 million](#) people over 55, mostly owner-occupiers, living in housing that fails government decency standards.** Acknowledge that living in poor quality housing has consequences: poorer mental and physical health, risks to independent living; major costs for the state in health and other [public](#) services. ([BRE](#) estimates the cost to the HS of non-decent homes in England to be c£1.4 billion p.a).
- **Tackle the estimated [shortfall of 258,000 units of specialist housing in England](#)** mainly in regions with higher levels of deprivation, poor health and disability among older people and lower healthy life expectancy. (See recent analysis showing only 519,000 units of specialist housing for older people in England, 73% social rented and 25% owner-occupied).

2. Do you have specific recommendations for the taskforce to consider?

National Government:

- **Invest in delivering age-appropriate housing and support services.** Top priorities should be:
 - housing support and assistance services (e.g., repairs, adaptations).
 - ensure newbuild housing routinely promotes independent living.
 - ensure effective partnership working across housing, social care, and health.
 - Develop effective information and advice that recognises the role specialist housing plays in healthy ageing.
- **[Rebuild](#) the national housing improvement policy framework** to tackle the problem of poor-quality housing:
 - ensure local authorities have the resources to fulfil their statutory duties and capacity to enforce housing quality standards.
 - build local infrastructure that can deliver housing improvements, bringing together a range of partners and funding mechanisms, so that specialist schemes and services can be organised.

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- plan and resource a series of long-term, nationally funded, and locally delivered interventions to improve housing quality.
- **Tackle the shortfall in specialist housing for older people.**
 - regenerate the ageing social rented stock on which many areas still rely.
 - stimulate new social provision that meet the needs of people unable to afford private housing solutions; and
 - address the modest output and restricted geography of new house building for older people by [private developers](#).