

28 July 2011

DRAFT NATIONAL STRATEGY FOR HOUSING FOR OLDER PEOPLE: CONSULTATION

The development of a national strategy for housing for older people is being taken forward as the main early action of '[Wider Planning for an Ageing Population](#)', the housing and communities workstream of 'Reshaping Care for Older People'. The strategy is due to be published in December and will set out how we plan to achieve the outcomes for older people's housing identified in the [Wider Planning for an Ageing Population report](#). It has been developed with the help of a working group, which includes COSLA, the SFHA, CIH and a wide range of other stakeholders, and we have also consulted with older people through Age Scotland's Local Housing Panels. We are very grateful for all their input.

The draft strategy is attached to this letter. Some further material, including a foreword, executive summary, case studies and conclusion, will be added prior to publication. The draft will also be updated to take account of ongoing work and developments, such as the Christie Commission report, and comments received from this consultation.

The draft strategy reflects the proposals made in the Wider Planning for an Ageing Population report, on which we carried out a full consultation during summer 2010, and takes account of comments received in that consultation. We are, therefore, undertaking a more limited two month consultation on the draft strategy. **Comments on the draft strategy will, of course, be welcomed and should be sent by 30 September**, either by e-mail to housingsupport@scotland.gsi.gov.uk, or by post to Independent Living Team, Housing Options and Support Division, Scottish Government, Mail Point 21, Area 1-H South, Victoria Quay, Edinburgh, EH6 6QQ. If you need any further information, please contact Jackie Walder on 0131-244-5527.

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**AGE, HOME AND COMMUNITY: A STRATEGY FOR HOUSING FOR
SCOTLAND'S OLDER PEOPLE: 2012 – 2021**

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Introduction

The number of people aged 75 and over is projected to increase by 23% between 2008 and 2018, and by 84% between 2008 and 2033¹. In the same 25 year period, the number of people aged 60 – 74 is projected to increase by 33%. A decline in population is forecast for all other age groups. In 2008, 23% of the population was aged 60 and over. By 2033, this is likely to have increased to 32%.

The Scottish Government has a longstanding policy of ‘shifting the balance of care’. This means supporting people to remain at home for as long as possible, rather than in care homes or hospitals.

This has been housing and community care policy under successive governments and has been given impetus by the likes of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities², where Article 19 sets out the right to independent living.

Housing and housing-related support have a key role to play in supporting a ‘shift in the balance of care’. As people age, their housing needs change and, in some cases, they will also need specialised support services. If these housing and support needs are not met, they can make it more difficult for people to remain in their own homes and increase the risk of accidents, undermining our aims to ‘shift the balance of care’. Emergency admissions to hospital by older people currently cost £1.4 billion each year and, without change, are expected to grow. The benefits of providing the right housing and support at the right time could, therefore, be considerable, by reducing both the costs and trauma of unplanned hospital admissions.

Some of the main ways in which the housing sector supports health and social care services and ‘shifting the balance of care’ are:

- Ensuring an appropriate balance of housing provision, both private and social rented, and a range of housing types, including extra care, sheltered and ordinary housing;
- Providing specialist housing with care and support, which supports additional health and care services for residents, and accommodation for respite and intermediate care, facilitating early discharge from hospital;
- Providing housing adaptations and other preventative property-related services, such as handyperson, small repairs and gardening services, which support people to remain at home comfortably and safely and reduce the risk of falls and other accidents;

¹ Projected Population of Scotland (2008-based), General Register Office for Scotland <http://www.gro-scotland.gov.uk/statistics/publications-and-data/popproj/projected-population-of-scotland-2008-based/index.html>, October 2009

² <http://www.un.org/disabilities/convention/conventionfull.shtml>

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- Providing Information and advice on housing and support services, so that older people can make informed choices which help them to remain living at home for longer; and
- Building new housing, both mainstream and specialist, which is adaptable and suits the needs of older people.

Demographic change is likely to lead to increased demand for such services, and with a more difficult financial environment, we need to change the way we provide housing and services to ensure that needs are met in ways that are sustainable.

The age distribution and balance of Scotland's population is predicted to change considerably over the coming years. The proportion of older people will dramatically increase, with the ageing of people born in the post-war 'baby boom' and increases in life expectancy. Although all areas will see an increase in the number of older people, there will be a considerable variation in that increase, from a 28% increase in the over 75 age group in Glasgow by 2033 to 151% in West Lothian. Overall, the bigger increases tend to be in more rural areas. The number of older people living alone is also forecast to rise, with single person households aged 75 and over projected to increase by 85% between 2008 and 2033³.

At the same time as these shifts in our population, we face the most difficult economic situation since devolution, with substantial reductions in public spending. The Scottish Budget has been cut by £1.3 billion in 2011-12, from that for 2010-11, and we will see spending reductions of over 11% in real terms between 2010-11 and 2014-15⁴. These reductions mean that we will all face difficult choices in how we use the limited funding we have. Continuing with traditional service models would require massive investment in new hospitals and care homes to maintain current levels of service:

- We currently spend around £4.5 billion of public funding each year on health and social care for people aged over 65 in Scotland. Over half of this is spent on providing institutional care in hospitals and care homes.
- We would require an annual increase in investment in health and social care services of £1.1 billion by 2016, assuming that demand increases in line with the growth in the older population and that service models remain the same⁵.

Such a dramatic increase in expenditure is not possible, even if we were not subject to budget reductions. It means we need to find new ways of delivering services and of improving the effectiveness of the services we already provide, so that they are sustainable in the long term. These include working more closely with, and learning

³ Household Projections for Scotland (2008 based), General Register Office for Scotland <http://www.gro-scotland.gov.uk/statistics/theme/households/projections/hproj-08-based/index.html>, May 2010

⁴ Scotland's Spending Plans and Draft Budget 2011-12 <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2010/11/17091127/23>

⁵ Reshaping Care for Older People: A Programme for Change 2011 – 2021 <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Health/care/reshaping/programme>

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from the private, third and voluntary sectors, developing new funding models and making better use of the wider community.

In view of the twin challenges of an ageing population and reduced public spending, the Scottish Government established the Reshaping Care for Older People programme⁶, in partnership with COSLA and the NHS, in 2009 to consider the future delivery of services for older people to ensure they are sustainable. As part of the Reshaping Care programme, the Wider Planning for an Ageing Population working group was set up to review issues relating to housing and communities.

Wider Planning for an Ageing Population

The establishment of a strategy for housing for older people was the main early action proposed by the Wider Planning for an Ageing Population working group in its final report, published in March 2010⁷. The group saw a need for the Scottish Government to set out a clear vision for housing and related support for older people, and a framework to enable delivery. This strategy sets out a framework, within which the work started by the Wider Planning for an Ageing Population working group will be taken forward.

The strategy aims to help ensure that a wide range of services is provided to enable older people to live independently at home. The vast majority of older people (95.9%) live at home. x are owner occupiers, with y owning their property outright. x are tenants of local authorities or housing associations and y live in privately rented homes. 6% live in supported housing (sheltered, retirement or extra care). Relatively small numbers of older people live in care homes (33,100 or 3.9%) or long stay hospital care (2,300 or 0.3%).

The strategy fits in with a number of existing Scottish Government policies and strategies in housing, health and social care. It builds on *Reshaping Care for Older People: A Programme for Change: 2011 – 2021*⁸, which sets out the headline ambitions for the Reshaping Care programme as a whole, along with the first set of actions required for delivery. It highlights the importance of housing in meeting the programme's aspirations, including through adaptations; housing with care and support; preventative services; and building standards.

The strategy also meets one of the commitments made in *Homes Fit for the 21st Century*⁹, the Scottish Government's strategy and action plan for housing for the next ten years and the first national housing strategy document to make commitments on independent living for older people and disabled people. This is a big step forward, but we recognise that there is some way to go until all older people and disabled people enjoy a full choice of housing and support options. *Homes Fit for the 21st Century* makes a number of commitments in relation to housing for older and disabled people, including:

⁶ <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Health/care/reshaping>
<http://www.jitscotland.org.uk/action-areas/reshaping-care-for-older-people/>

⁷ Wider Planning for an Ageing Population: Final report (<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Built-Environment/Housing/access/ROOPH/wpfaapreportmarch10>)

⁸ <http://www.jitscotland.org.uk/action-areas/reshaping-care-for-older-people/>

⁹ <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Built-Environment/Housing/reform>

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- The publication of a national strategy on housing for older people in 2011;
- Development of a national register of accessible housing;
- Simplification of the arrangements for the public and housing providers to access adaptations;
- Ensuring needs of older and disabled people are better reflected within national and local planning and housing investment processes; and
- Building on the introduction of the new Change Fund and work with local authorities and the NHS to ensure the housing, health and social care needs of individuals are addressed more holistically.

Supporting health and social care

Around 50% of men and 54% of women aged 75 and over identify themselves as having limiting long-term conditions. These may be physical or mental conditions or disabilities, which restrict daily activities. For those aged 65 – 74, 43% of men and 44% of women have such conditions¹⁰.

The strategy contributes to *Independent Living – A Shared Vision*¹¹. This statement sets out an agreed vision for disabled people, based on choice, control, freedom and dignity, and was signed in December 2009 by the Scottish Government, COSLA and disabled people represented by the Independent Living in Scotland Steering Group.

Older age often brings reductions in mobility, and there are increasing numbers of people with dementia in Scotland. A familiar home environment is particularly important to people with dementia, and appropriate adaptations can help to support them to remain at home. *Scotland's National Dementia Strategy*¹² notes that most people with dementia wish to remain living at home, and that 63.5% do so. This brings benefits for them and lower costs. The Dementia Strategy highlights the importance of preventative support in enabling them to avoid crises and the potential need for expensive hospital services. It also notes the need for 're-ablement services' to allow people to return home after a stay in hospital.

The Scottish Government operates a policy of Free Personal Care¹³ for people aged 65 and over, who have been assessed as having personal care needs that require services to be put in place. This care may be provided in a care home or in the person's own home. Around 55,300 older people (6.5%) receive home care services provided by the local authority to enable them to live independently at home. Commonly, these services may include help to get up in the morning and/or to go to bed at night, or help with food preparation.

¹⁰ The Scottish Health Survey 2008 (<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2009/09/28102003/11>)

¹¹ <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2010/03/29164308/2>

¹² <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2010/09/10151751/17>

¹³ <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Health/care/17655>

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As well as receiving care, many older people are unpaid carers for family members or friends. A recent survey found that approximately 3,000 people over 65 receive more than 20 hours of care per week, while data indicates that over 40,000 people over 65 provide more than 20 hours of unpaid care per week. *Caring Together: The Carers' Strategy for Scotland 2010 – 2015*¹⁴ recognises the contribution made by Scotland's unpaid carers. The strategy sets out a vision, whereby:

- Carers are recognised and valued as equal partners in care;
- They are supported to manage their caring responsibilities in good health and to have a life outside caring;
- They are fully engaged in planning and developing their support, and the support of those they care for; and
- They are not disadvantaged, or discriminated against, by virtue of being a carer.

Self-directed support gives older people choice, control, freedom and dignity, which are the four principles of independent living. It is about enabling people who need care to direct their own support, helping them to make an informed choice about how that support is provided and how much control they wish to have. *Self-directed Support: A National Strategy for Scotland*¹⁵ sets out the Scottish Government's strategy on self-directed support. It highlights the importance of choice, both in enabling older people to choose forms of support which reflect their lifestyles and in securing a range of different services to support individual choice.

¹⁴ <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2010/07/23153304/0>

¹⁵ <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2010/11/05120810/0>

Our vision

Older people in Scotland are valued as an asset, their voices are heard, and older people are supported to enjoy full and positive lives in their own home or in a homely setting.

We want to see more older people living in housing which suits their needs and helps maintain their independence. Housing is not just bricks and mortar, but a reflection of experience and facilitator of lifestyle choices. It is important to everyone, but particularly to older people who are likely to spend more time there than those of working age and to have impairments which reduce their mobility. As the number of older people in the population increases, so does diversity, accompanied by changing demands and aspirations. As with the rest of society, older people are becoming increasingly active consumers and rightly expect choice in their housing and support.

What older people are looking for in their homes will clearly vary from person to person, but generally, the following areas are seen as important: adaptability; space for storage and visitors/carers; low maintenance; safety; downstairs bathroom, with level access shower; affordable to heat; manageable garden; access to transport and amenities; safe and secure communities; repairs and adaptations services; and involvement in planning.

Based on its discussions and research with older people and other interested parties, the Wider Planning for an Ageing Population working group identified five main outcomes that should be achieved for housing for older people:

- Clear strategic leadership is in place at national and local level about the housing outcomes to be delivered for older people;
- The information and advice needed by older people to make the best decisions about their housing and support are provided;
- Older people are better assisted to remain in, and make best use of, existing housing stock;
- Investment in new housing provision across the sectors meets future needs of older people; and
- The needs of older people for low level, preventative support are met.

The main themes

Underlying these outcomes, there are a number of important themes, on which this strategy is based, and which run through the actions to be taken forward. These are:

- **Older people as an asset.** While there are challenges in ageing, older people are an asset to our society and also a big part of the solution, in terms of the care

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and support they provide themselves. Older people's experiences are vital to ensuring that the services they use are fit for purpose. They should be involved in the planning and design of services which affect them, using models of co-production.

- **Choice.** As life expectancy increases, we have multiple generations of older people, with differing needs and expectations, reflecting their individual life experiences. There is no single model of housing and support services that meets the needs of all. We, therefore, need a range of different types of services that enable older people to choose the options, which reflect their individual lifestyles and are best for them. This is consistent with the principles of self-directed support.
- **Planning ahead.** Younger people need to consider their options for older age, before they reach it and when they are most able to do so. Planning for older age should be seen as a positive part of life, enabling people to prepare for their future needs and enhancing their later years. The suitability of the home, in the event of more limited mobility, what changes would need to be made or whether a move should be considered.
- **Preventative support.** Most of the support services advocated in this strategy provide a relatively inexpensive and cost-effective way of enabling older people to live independently at home. They are generally preventative in nature and can help avert accidents, and so avoid more costly and traumatic hospital admissions or a move to a care home.

Our commitments

This strategy presents a ten year vision for housing and housing-related support services for older people. The outcomes that we seek and these commitments can only be delivered with concerted and co-ordinated action across central and local government, and in partnership with older people, local communities and service providers.

The Wider Planning for an Ageing Population report identified five outcomes that should be achieved for housing for older people. The following chapters set out the actions we will take in relation to each outcome, and what we expect to achieve.

We know that things will not stand still, and that new issues will arise within that time, as well as new opportunities and technologies. We will, therefore, have to be flexible and adapt our approach, as circumstances change. We will monitor our programme of actions closely and will undertake a major review of progress after five years in 2016.

Although this strategy focuses on older people and their housing needs, many of the housing features and types of support (e.g. adaptations) which are helpful to older people will also assist other groups, most significantly disabled people. For this reason, the Scottish Government is working with disabled people as well as older people, in taking forward many of the actions in this strategy.

Clear strategic leadership

The Scottish Government should provide a clear vision for housing for older people in Scotland, which enables housing to play a full role in partnership with health and social care in supporting older people to live independently.

Working in partnership

The Scottish Government is working to improve outcomes for older people, enabling them to live independently at home for as long as possible. Our role is to set the policy direction for Scotland as a whole, with our priority on facilitating the development of housing and services which help older people to live comfortably and securely. In doing this, we recognise that decisions on local policy and service delivery should be taken by those who know the local area and people best. We are also clear that, in developing policies relating to older people and services for them, we need to listen to older people and encourage their opinions both nationally and locally.

Our work on the Reshaping Care for Older People programme has helped to increase understanding of the challenges of demographic change across Scotland, and the need to create an environment where housing, health and social care at all levels work together more effectively and efficiently. To support integration between housing, health and social care at national level, the Reshaping Care programme includes in its vision a specific outcome that more older people should live in housing, which suits their needs and helps maintain their independence¹⁶.

Possible case study of consultation with older people in development of services (Full detail on case studies to be added before publication)

Strategic planning

Strategic planning is about setting out what we want to achieve and how we will do it. We recognise that effective strategic planning processes are vital to ensuring that we have the right mix of housing and support services, as our population ages and changes. However, housing, health and social care have different planning processes and use different terminology. We need to strengthen the connections between them, to ensure there is mutual understanding and alignment of priorities at a strategic level. We also need to be clearer about the links to local delivery and the incentives needed to make things happen and achieve progress.

We will continue the development of Local Housing Strategies¹⁷, which set out local needs for housing and related support over a five year period in each council area, translating national policy into local delivery, taking account of local policies and priorities. Greater integration between Local Housing Strategies and local health

¹⁶ Reshaping Care for Older People: A Programme for Change 2011 – 2021

<http://www.jitscotland.org.uk/action-areas/reshaping-care-for-older-people/>

¹⁷ <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Built-Environment/Housing/supply-demand/lhs>

and social care planning will help to ensure that they reinforce each other through the identification of common aims and priorities and promotion of greater integration in the assessment of need and associated planning of investment and services.

Local delivery

Housing, health and social care can work together in many different ways to improve service provision to help older people live independently at home. Greater communication and understanding of what each sector can offer will help to improve co-operation between them. Working to build shared ownership and accountability for delivery of outcomes should help to improve the quality and effectiveness of services. This could also help all three sectors to streamline and integrate the best of what they can offer.

Reductions in public funding mean we have to be more creative in the way we deliver services. Collaboration may include the sharing of resources, such as staff, buildings or funding, with benefits of increased efficiency in the services people receive and in budgetary terms. Improvements in the assessment of individual needs and allocation of properties can help to make best use of the available housing stock. A holistic approach with integration of the whole package of support that people receive can help to improve delivery, particularly its quality and effectiveness in achieving the desired outcomes. Increasing use of self-directed support may assist this process, helping to personalise services to each individual's circumstances. We need, therefore, to increase awareness among older people of the benefits self-directed support can bring.

Housing and housing-related support play an important preventative role, but interaction with health and social care services often arises at times of crisis, such as following emergency admission to hospital after a fall. This reflects how people's housing needs can change very suddenly and, if mobility is reduced, may result in a need for adaptations, or even a move to a new home. In these types of circumstances, joint working is essential to help people return to their homes and communities and will be made easier if good relationships already exist between housing, health and social care at local level.

Possible case study of service integration in a re-ablement project

The Scottish Government's £70 million Change Fund¹⁸ has been established, with the agreement of COSLA, to support the improvements needed to 'shift the balance of care' from institutional care settings to the community. The aim of the Fund is to optimise independence and wellbeing for older people at home, and the money can be used by local Community Planning Partnerships to fund innovation in a range of local social care and housing services, supporting integration between housing, health and social care. It provides a real opportunity for greater engagement and collaboration between Community Planning Partnerships and the housing and voluntary sectors.

¹⁸ <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Health/care/reshaping/guidance>

Beyond the public sector

We recognise that working in partnership extends beyond the public sector. Today's older people are predominantly home owners, and many will use services delivered by the private sector. At both national and local level, we need to ensure that we work with the private sector to ensure that older people can choose from a range of high quality housing and services, which enable them to select the support that most suits their needs and lifestyle. We also recognise that we can learn from the private sector and its responsiveness to changes in demand and the provision of choice.

Many of the preventative support services which help older people to live independently at home are provided by organisations in the third and voluntary sectors. Again, the delivery of services by different types of providers helps to extend the range of services from which older people can choose those that meet their needs. We need to work with the third and voluntary sectors at both national and local level to support them to develop sustainable funding models that will ensure their survival through difficult economic times.

Demonstrating the benefits of housing and support

There is widespread agreement about the social advantages and financial benefits of enabling older people to live independently at home, both to the individuals themselves and to the wider community. Housing adaptations and other housing-related preventative support services play a major role in achieving this. We also recognise that good housing and housing related support can provide benefits, which have an impact throughout the health and social care systems, by reducing hospital admissions and delayed discharge. However, we know that providers of such services find it difficult to quantify the benefits their services provide. This can make them vulnerable when public funding is tight, and there are difficult choices to be made. We believe that the case for these services needs to be better made and recognised to enable service providers and others to demonstrate the benefits they bring.

What we are doing/will do

We will improve our strategic leadership by:

- **Setting a clear vision for housing for older people.** Through this strategy, we will align the outcomes we want to achieve with our priorities to provide a national framework for delivery by housing, health and social care.
- **Promoting consultation with older people.** We will engage with older people, to take account of their views, in the development of policy initiatives which affect them.
- **Joining up our planning processes.** We will continue to work with local authorities and health boards to support greater integration of strategic planning at local level.

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- **Supporting service innovation to ‘shift the balance of care’.** We have established the £70 million Change Fund to support the innovations in services which help older people to live independently at home.
- **Demonstrating the case for housing and support.** We will identify the case for investment in housing and related support to achieve the outcomes we are seeking for housing for older people. This would bring together evidence of the impact achieved in relation to particular aspects of different support services. To make the case for investment, we will commission research to increase knowledge of the types of housing and support that are most effective in supporting older people to live at home.

By 2021, we will have increased the number of older people who live independently in the community and the range of housing and support services which help them to do this.

Information and advice

Older people should receive the information and advice they need in time to make the best decisions about their housing and support.

This strategy recognises the importance of choice, through the delivery of a range of housing-related support options those older people who need them. However, it is not enough that this support exists. We need to ensure that older people know about the services that are available and how to get them. This is particularly important for home owners, who don't have a landlord to turn to for housing advice or help with adaptations.

Good information can empower people to take a more active role in directing their care and support. Many older people receive significant amounts of support through informal networks of family and friends, and their advice can be important in reaching decisions about issues such as moving home and seeking adaptations or preventative support services. However, we believe that awareness can be increased through the provision of high quality information and advice services. There are already many good information and advice services available in Scotland, which are not always well publicised, and some of these are specifically targeted at older people. However, we believe there may be scope to extend existing networks, including those provided by older people themselves, to increase provision of advice on housing and support for older people.

Possible case study of advice service for older people

Older people are sometimes reluctant to seek advice, and care needs to be taken in how information and advice is provided to them. Although use of technology and the internet is increasing, older people currently have lower levels of internet usage than the rest of the population. Although this will change over time, many older people particularly value face to face advice. They also need information and advice that is tailored to their own situation, including in other languages, Braille or recorded voice where appropriate. This type of contact, and support to make choices, is especially important, where major life changing decisions are being made, such as moving from the family home. In rural areas, older people are often dependent on home visits for information, where it is important to have locally known and trusted advisers with the ability to signpost people to other sources of information.

Housing options

The housing options approach, including the concept of the 'housing health check' has been piloted with homeless people. We believe that the same principles could benefit other groups with particular housing needs, including older people, by providing intensive advice and support at times of transition, e.g. a move to a new home.

Possible case study of housing options service for older people

Scottish National Standards for Information and Advice

We are working to improve the standard of information and advice provision in Scotland through the development and promotion of the Scottish National Standards for Information and Advice Providers.¹⁹ The National Standards provide a framework for information and advice providers to develop and deliver effective and efficient services.

What we are doing/will do

We will ensure that older people receive the information and advice they need by:

- **Reviewing information and advice services.** We will examine information and advice services of relevance to housing and support services for older people, taking account of existing advice provision to ensure the best use is made of information about the opportunities available to older people.
- **Publicising information sources.** We will continue to publicise existing sources of information, such as the Care Information Service, the Age Scotland Helpline, Citizens Advice Bureau and Citizens Advice Direct.
- **Joining up with health and social care.** We will integrate online information on housing and support for older people with the Care Information Service to create a 'one stop' website for care and housing information for older people in Scotland.
- **Making choice matter.** We will pilot the housing options approach for older people and, if successful, promote its implementation more widely across Scotland.
- **Enhancing the quality of advice.** We will encourage organisations providing information and advice to older people to gain accreditation under the Scottish National Standards for Information and Advice Providers.

By 2016, we will have extended the range of information and advice services for older people/ there will be a comprehensive range of information and advice services covering housing and related support, which are accessible to older people throughout Scotland.

¹⁹ <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Built-Environment/Housing/access/nationalstandards>

Better use of existing housing

This strategy recognises the importance of existing housing for older people and places considerable emphasis on making sure that the right services are in place to make best use of that housing. The great majority of the current population, not just those who are already over 65 years, will live their lives in houses which are already built. While new housing continues to be built, current rates of house building both in the private and public sector will only gradually replace and extend the existing stock of housing.

We recognise that older people do not all want to live in the same way and in the same types of housing. In finding ways to make better use of our existing housing, our focus will be on all tenures – privately owned housing, private rented housing, local authority and housing association properties. We will focus on both ‘ordinary’ housing and housing which has been specifically designed to meet the needs of older people.

Our review of evidence has highlighted five areas where improvements are needed in particular. These are:

- ***Housing adaptations services*** – making alterations to people’s homes to increase or maintain their independence and reduce the risk of an accident;
- ***Repairs services*** – making improvements to people’s homes, particularly where basic amenities fall below standards which are acceptable today;
- ***Support to move home*** – helping older people with the emotional and physical demands of moving home, so they can move to a property which better suits their needs;
- ***Housing with care or support*** – making better use of our existing stock of housing which has been built specifically for older people, particularly sheltered housing; and
- ***Personal resources and investment in housing*** – assisting older people to use the assets in their home to provide themselves with the housing which is most suitable for their needs.

Housing adaptations services

We want to see housing adaptations services across Scotland that respond to the challenges of an ageing population. All older people, wherever they live and whatever the tenure of their home, should have access to services which can adapt their home, reducing the risk of accidents, and improving their independence and quality of life.

Adaptations are a key contribution by the housing sector to enabling people to sustain independent living. They help to prevent falls and have benefits for health and wellbeing, by enabling people to make full use of their homes. They can also

help carers, by reducing the risk of injury and improving physical and mental health. There is now a significant body of evidence that shows the importance and cost effectiveness of housing adaptations in reducing accidents in the home. For example, in 2007 the cost of a fractured hip was estimated at £29,000, compared with £6,000 for a major housing adaptation, or a few hundred pounds for grab rails²⁰.

There has been a significant increase over the past five years in the number of homes which have been adapted, with the number more than doubling from 149,000 to 471,000 homes. Local authorities, housing associations and householders have clearly been investing substantially in making these adaptations. However, in spite this, the number of people saying that they require an adaptation fell by only 16,000, from 150,000 to 134,000.

We need to find better ways to ensure that this investment is available to others who need an adapted home. We must also recognise that more people will need adaptations, as the population ages. Our review of current arrangements has shown that there are opportunities to improve both the quality of adaptations services and outcomes for those who have them, while also improving cost efficiency. There are issues about the time taken to get adaptations installed, which may be reduced by greater use of self-assessment of need; design and quality; and questions about how equitable the current funding arrangements are, with different funding streams depending on the tenure of the property.

Our priority is to make better use of the existing arrangements for providing housing adaptations, and of those properties which have already been adapted. We know that locally there are excellent examples of streamlined, effective services, and we want to see this good practice replicated across Scotland. We are confident that more can be achieved within the existing arrangements and the current level of resources. As part of this, we will consider whether there are organisational changes which may be of benefit, and ways to make better use of the existing network of Care and Repair services across Scotland.

Possible case study of fast track adaptations service

The Housing (Scotland) Act 2006²¹ established the Scheme of Assistance, under which local authorities have a general duty to assist home owners and people in the private rented sector who need adaptations to their homes through the provision of advice, practical help or financial assistance. Most structural adaptations attract a mandatory grant of 80%, as long as a priority need has been established. This increases to 100%, if the person receives certain income-based benefits. The Scheme of Assistance has been operating since 2009, and the disability adaptations elements are due to be reviewed in 2012.

We also need to make better use of those properties which have already been adapted, ensuring that where possible they are allocated to disabled people and older people, and that adaptations are not removed without good reason. We have

²⁰ Better Outcomes, lower costs <http://odi.dwp.gov.uk/common/publications-index.php>

²¹ <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2006/1/contents>

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supported the development of a register of accessible housing to assist people to find adapted housing in locations that are right for them.

What we are doing/will do

We will improve the arrangements for housing adaptations by:

- **Ensuring that funding arrangements are fit for purpose.** We will consider whether there is a need for fundamental change to the funding and delivery of housing adaptations so that they provide the best outcomes for those who need them. We recognise that the current arrangements, with different processes and funding streams for the different housing tenures is confusing to our customers, as well as to partners in health and social care.
- **Reviewing support for adaptations for home owners.** We will review the disability adaptations elements of the Scheme of Assistance to assess whether changes are required, pending any more fundamental change in the delivery of adaptations across all housing tenures.
- **Making the best use of adapted properties.** We will continue to support the development of a register of accessible housing by Glasgow Centre for Inclusive Living and Ownership Options.

By 2021, we expect/aim to reduce the proportion of people who say that they need an adaptation to their home.

Repairs services

Older people should live in homes, which are warm, dry and secure, and should have easy access to reliable tradespeople to undertake repairs and maintenance.

Many homes, particularly in the private sector, have some level of disrepair. In most cases, this is relatively minor and does not cause serious problems. However, in some instances, disrepair is of a level that it affects the occupier's health and presents dangers to everyday living. Responsibility for repairs and maintenance is an important part of home ownership, but older people can find it more difficult to maintain their homes in a good state of repair, often due to problems in finding reliable tradespeople to undertake repairs. Helping older people to maintain their homes can help to improve health and reduce hospital admissions. In these circumstances, access to good information and advice is important to let people know what services are available in their area.

The Scottish Housing Quality Standard (SHQS)²² is the Scottish Government's principal measure of housing quality. It provides a minimum standard, below which a property should not fall. Housing owned by local authorities and housing associations must meet the standard by April 2015. Private sector housing is not

²² <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Built-Environment/Housing/16342/shqs>

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required to meet the standard, but can be assessed against it. In 2004-05, 77% of older people were living in properties which failed the SHQS, and this fell to 71% in 2007. This proportion is higher and falling more slowly than that for the rest of the population. The Tolerable Standard defines the minimum condition that is required for a home to be habitable. A very few homes in Scotland do not yet meet the Tolerable Standard, and most of these are privately owned and in rural areas.

Keeping the home sufficiently warm is a major challenge for many older people. 'Fuel poverty' is the term used to describe the situation where a household must pay more than 10% of its income to heat the home to an adequate level. The Scottish Government is working to eradicate fuel poverty as far as is reasonably practicable by 2016. We introduced the Energy Assistance Package²³, a holistic package of measures to tackle all aspects of fuel poverty, in 2009 to replace the Warm Deal and Central Heating Programmes. The Progress Report on the Scottish Fuel Poverty Statement 2002²⁴ describes how work towards the 2016 target is being taken forward by the Scottish Government and its partners.

What we are doing/will do

We will help older people to improve their properties by:

- **Improving the quality of our housing stock.** We will support the improvement of housing quality, so that housing in the social rented sector meets the Scottish Housing Quality Standard by April 2015.
- **Helping older home owners to maintain their homes.** We will support the extension of information and advice to help home owners to find reliable tradespeople to undertake repairs and maintenance, including through the development of trusted traders schemes.
- **Keeping warm.** We will continue to review the Energy Assistance Package to help older people to maintain a comfortable and warm home environment.

By 2021, we will have increased the number of older people who live in well-maintained and warm homes, which are free from significant disrepair.

Support to move home

Advice and practical assistance should be available to all older people, to help them find housing, which provides a suitable physical environment to meet their health, social care and support needs.

We know that older people want to remain living at home for as long as possible. However, we also know that, in some cases, it may not be possible to undertake the adaptations required to meet the individual's needs. Where this is the case, a move to a more suitable home, before a crisis point is reached, may well be the best

²³ <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Built-Environment/Housing/access/FP/eap>

²⁴ <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2010/11/23134646/0>

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option. Older people can be reluctant to move from a family home, partly because of the emotional upheaval and partly because of the practical and financial demands. They may also find they are forced to stay in unsuitable housing, simply because of the difficulties and demands of finding a suitable alternative property and coping with the move. Informal support networks can be important here, but we will also support the development of more effective ways, including the provision of independent information and advice, to assist older people to move at the right time to homes which better meet their current and future needs.

Moving home can be stressful at any age, but for an older person it is often more so, partly because the move may mean leaving a long time family home with the emotions that surround this, but also because of the physical demands associated with moving house. This highlights a need for practical support for moving, as well as information and advice about the availability of alternative housing options. Some social landlords offer 'downsizing' schemes, which help people living in homes which are too big for their needs to move to a more suitable property, which may be nearer to family support networks. Provision of practical support usually forms a key part of such schemes, and there is sometimes an additional financial incentive.

There are benefits to the wider housing system when older people move from larger to smaller properties, in terms of 'freeing up' family homes. However, we are clear that such moves should be an independent choice, and older people should not be coerced into moving.

What we are doing/will do

We will help older people seeking a move by:

- **Building on best practice in the social rented sector.** We will encourage all social landlords, both local authority and housing association, to build on the experience of those landlords that have introduced packages of support and assistance for older people to move to more suitable properties. We know that older people can be reluctant to move from a family home, partly because of the emotional upheaval and partly because of the practical and financial demands.
- **Making available comprehensive information and advice on housing, support and care options.** We will re-shape and, if necessary, extend, existing services so that older people, whatever their housing circumstances, have the opportunity to access information and advice about their housing, support and care options. The importance of information and advice has been a recurring feature across the Reshaping Care programme, and older people have made it clear to us that they want more information and advice which is relevant to their individual circumstances to help them make decisions
- **Developing practical services.** We will explore the feasibility of and, if appropriate, support the development of services operating on social enterprise principles, which support older people in looking for a suitable home and in making the move.

By 2021, we aim to reduce the proportion of older people who say that they want to move to more suitable housing.

Housing with care or support

We should make best use of our public investment in sheltered and very sheltered housing, so that it helps shifts the balance of care away from care homes and supports objectives to reduce the need for an emergency admission to hospital.

Around 6% of older people live in housing with care or support, such as sheltered housing, very sheltered housing or extra care housing. It is popular with the great majority of current residents as a positive choice of independence with support. Most of this housing is in the social rented sector, although private retirement housing, offering similar services, has increased in popularity in recent years. One of the main benefits to residents of such housing is its impact in reducing isolation through the opportunity to live in a ready-made community with provision of social activities.

Housing with care or support is a limited resource, and it is important that it is provided to people who need and can benefit from the services it offers. The Scottish Government's Social Housing Allocations Practice Guide²⁵ provides guidance to local authorities and housing associations on the allocation of social housing. It sets out the issues landlords should consider when determining a person's priority for housing on the grounds of health or disability, and on allocating them a home. We have committed to further supporting social landlords to respond to the needs of their communities and will consult later this year on minimising the legislative constraints on landlords' allocations policies to give them greater flexibility.

There are some particular issues around the allocation of housing with care and support to older people. An assessment of need should be undertaken before entry to this type of housing to ensure that those to whom it is allocated actually need the services it provides, ensuring that prospective tenants are made aware of the charges for those services. Integration of assessment between housing, health and social care (e.g. through the use of single shared assessment) will help to ensure the best use of our stock of housing with care or support and also of mainstream homes with features which are particularly useful for older people.

Possible case study of integrated assessment for allocation of sheltered housing

Substantial changes are taking place in the way that housing with care and support is delivered, and there are a number of issues to be addressed to make best use of the existing sheltered housing in the social rented sector. Some developments face low demand and are proving difficult to let. This is usually due to their location, quality or design, with bedsit accommodation now particularly unpopular. Some

²⁵<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Built-Environment/Housing/16342/management/socialhousingaccess/allocations/Guide>

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providers are seeking to remodel these developments, so that they meet the changing needs of older people.

Other changes, including the EU Working Time Directive and pressures on funding for housing support services, have affected the traditional model of warden services and arrangements for common services, so that sheltered housing developments with full-time on-site wardens are now increasingly rare. At the same time, there is growing interest in new and innovative models of support and the role that very sheltered and extra care housing can play as an alternative to care homes, and in the provision of services to the wider community.

What we are doing/will do

We will make best use of our existing stock of sheltered and very sheltered housing by:

- **Gathering and sharing experience.** We will prepare a practical guide to the redevelopment of existing sheltered housing to provide new sheltered and very sheltered housing – to provide a varied and flexible range of supported housing for older people. This will be prepared as a priority in recognition of the immediate issues for social landlords who have sheltered housing, which is no longer fit for purpose or which could be used more effectively. The guide will describe and illustrate the wide range of different types of housing with care and support, including sheltered, very sheltered and extra care housing, which can be developed in both the public and private sectors. We will analyse the experience of those who have developed supported housing, by converting existing general needs and sheltered housing, distilling the learning points, identifying pitfalls and approaches to address these.
- **Addressing barriers.** We will provide practical advice about the development of supported housing, the issues to be addressed and ways to do this. This will include ways to achieve an integrated package of funding for both construction work and service provision. We will support the objective within the wider Reshaping Care programme to put in place arrangements so that public sector resources from all sources (NHS, Councils, Benefits) are available to fund any aspect of care.

By 2021, we will have facilitated the upgrading or redevelopment of sheltered housing (in the social rented sector) that is no longer fit for purpose, whether through physical re-modelling, re-focusing its use, or re-designing support services, so that it most effectively the needs of the local population.

Personal resources and investment in housing

Products and services should be available to provide older people with choice and flexibility to invest safely in their housing and support, and to achieve the personal outcomes they want.

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An increasing proportion of older people are home owners, and most wish to remain so. In 2006-08, 65% of households in Scotland owned property, with a median net property wealth of £100,000²⁶. However, although many older people own their homes outright or have considerable amounts of equity, they often have very low incomes, which do not allow them to make adaptations or improvements which could enhance their ability to remain living independently at home. People in this situation could benefit from products, which would enable them to release money from their property to fund adaptations or repairs or pay for care and support. Changes which support this would not only achieve the outcomes desired by many older people, but could also ease pressures on the social rented sector and bring in much needed resources to the housing sector.

Products which enable people to use their personal resources to meet their needs are clearly important, but current equity release models have limited uptake. This is largely due to their poor perception among older people. We recognise that any older person considering such a product should only do so after taking independent financial advice. However, while these products will not be right for everyone, particularly for people with low levels of equity in their homes, we believe that the expansion of choice for older people should include the option to use resources from property equity to improve their ability to remain at home.

What we are doing/will do

We will seek ways to improve the options for older people by:

- **Making it easier and safer for older people to access the equity in their homes.** We will consider whether there are ways of, and benefits to, developing financial products that are more attractive.
- **Encouraging new and sustainable financial models.** We will consider the potential for new mixed or flexible tenure arrangements, which support national policy objectives and help individuals better to achieve the personal outcomes they seek.

By 2021, we will have helped more older people to use their personal resources to make improvements to their home and support arrangements, which increase their independence and quality of life.

²⁶ Wealth in Great Britain: Main results from the Wealth and Assets Survey 2006-08
<http://www.statistics.gov.uk/STATBASE/Product.asp?vlnk=15074>

New build housing

New housing in Scotland should be accessible and adaptable and meet the needs of older people.

Scotland needs more homes to meet the needs of our changing population. Building new, affordable and sustainable housing is a priority for government, with a range of house types and sizes that encourages mobility in the housing system, enabling downsizing for those who wish this. With the current economic situation and rate of increase in the number of older people, we have to be realistic and recognise that only a small proportion of older people will live in new build housing. However, owner occupancy remains higher among older people than the general population, giving them more options for moving home, if suitable properties are available. It is, therefore, important that the housing that is built makes the maximum impact, meeting the needs of an ageing population, in terms of its potential to accommodate people with particular mobility needs. We encourage early engagement between house builders, local authorities and communities to ensure new housing meets the needs of the local population, including older people.

While older people benefit from homes that are easy to manage and maintain, it should not be assumed that they want small one bedroom properties. People now reaching older age, who wish to downsize, are likely to want a reasonably-sized property with at least one spare bedroom, giving flexibility so that friends and relatives can visit, maintaining their social networks. A spare bedroom can also accommodate a carer. Good storage space is also important. Many older people spend most of their time at home and have a lifetime of possessions, and it supports their mental wellbeing to retain them. Some also have bulky mobility equipment. Homes should be easily accessible and adaptable, in the event of reduced mobility, with a level access shower or wet room. As older people make greater use of technology at home, integrated provision of broadband will support the installation of telecare equipment, as well as home computer equipment.

Planning

New housing that meets the needs of older people will contribute to helping older people to remain at home and reduce the need for adaptations. There is a perception that recent house building has consisted predominantly of small flats and large family homes. However, Scottish Planning Policy²⁷ requires that new housing developments should include a variety of house types and sizes, reflecting local community needs set out in Housing Need and Demand Assessments²⁸. Housing Need and Demand Assessments allow local authorities to understand the numbers of older people requiring housing and existing housing patterns.

The Scottish Government's objectives of creating successful places and achieving quality residential environments should guide the whole process of delivering new housing. A well integrated mix of land uses is important to all of the community, but

²⁷ Scottish Planning Policy <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2010/02/03132605/0>

²⁸ <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Built-Environment/Housing/supply-demand/guidance>

for older people, the importance may increase. For new housing to be attractive to older people, it needs to be built on level ground, with good landscaping or paving. Easy access to transport links and amenities is important, particularly in rural areas. This helps to reduce isolation, which is likely to occur if people are unable to go out and be active in their communities.

Possible case study of mainstream housing development with housing suitable for older people

Building standards

A greater variety of new homes which are attractive to older people could be helpful in supporting the housing market and in releasing larger family homes. This includes housing that can be adapted to meet older people's needs as required. However, attractive and accessible homes will appeal to many people, not just those who are older. Scottish Building Standards²⁹ include a range of measures to improve accessibility and ease of use in new homes. As the Building Standards apply to all new homes in both the private and public sectors, they will ensure that all new homes built in Scotland are both more immediately accessible and simpler to adapt to suit the changing needs and abilities of the occupants.

Scottish Building Standards also require new homes to be energy efficient – well insulated with efficient heating systems, which are effectively controlled. This ensures that the cost of heating a home is minimised, which is of particular importance where there is a desire or need for warmer room temperatures or longer heating periods, both of which may be preferred by a range of households, including older people.

In May 2011, sustainability labelling was introduced to the Building Standards. Applicable to all new buildings, the system will define higher standards as a means of measuring sustainability. Its aims are to encourage more sustainable buildings, through two optional enhanced upper levels to which developers can aspire, and for such benefits to be formally recognised. One aspect of the measures aims to address quality of life issues, such as flexible living, working and studying patterns for individuals, groups and families. This includes an additional space for an electric wheelchair or a bicycle; a dedicated space for home working; and a 'quick start' guide for new occupants to optimise a home's performance. It is anticipated these will not only assist in meeting the needs of our ageing population, but also the well being of the wider population.

Housing for Varying Needs³⁰ sets out good practice on the design of housing to achieve flexibility and suitability for people of all abilities. It was published in 1998 and forms part of the criteria for receipt of Scottish Government funding for new house building by housing associations. However, with advances in Scottish Building Standards in relation to accessibility, there is a question mark as to whether Housing for Varying Needs still has a role to play.

²⁹ <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Built-Environment/Building/Building-standards>

³⁰ Housing for Varying Needs Parts 1 and 2

<http://www.archive2.official-documents.co.uk/menu/bycs.htm>

Innovation

We are keen to encourage the development of new and innovative types of housing that enable older people to maintain their independence in the community. New build housing with care and support often offers services to the wider community, expanding the provision of preventative support and building social networks. Other new forms of housing include co-housing, where people live together in a group which shares common aims and activities, while also having their own self-contained accommodation. Retirement villages can also provide another option for older people, who wish to live in a community setting with support and care available on site.

Possible case study of innovative housing for older people

What we are doing/will do

We will make new housing more attractive to older people by:

- **Ensuring new housing is suitable for older people.** We will work closely with public and private sector housing providers to review whether current building and design standards meet the needs of older people and others with particular needs in our communities. In particular, we will examine whether Housing for Varying Needs standards still have a role to play, following changes to Scottish Building Standards in 2007.
- **Influencing local planning.** We will work to increase awareness of the features of new housing that are important to older people and how they can be built into new developments.
- **Promoting new housing models.** We will encourage the development of new models of housing with care and support in all tenures, which help older people to maintain independent living in the community.

By 2021, we will have increased the proportion of new housing being built that is suitable for and attractive to older people.

Preventative support

The housing sector has a long tradition of providing low level, preventative support services, either as part of housing management services, provided under tenancy agreements, or through separately funded housing support services, such as the former Supporting People programme. Social landlords also play a key role in supporting wider activities in local communities, and services are also provided by Care and Repair. For many older people, these services are delivered alongside home care services provided by local authority social work departments.

There is a growing body of evidence that investment in services which support older people to remain independent and avoid accidents in the home and social isolation make an enormous difference to quality of life and are cost-effective. These services also contribute to health and social care objectives of reducing unplanned hospital admissions and delayed discharge. However, preventative support services remain vulnerable, when public funding is under pressure.

This recognition of the contribution and value of services which have a preventative focus – avoiding or delaying the need for more intensive services, or more importantly avoiding incidents which may lead to hospital admission – is shared with partners in health and social care. The whole Reshaping Care programme gives increasing priority to those services, which help prevent greater needs arising or ‘anticipate’ and plan for changing needs. Co-ordinated action across housing, health and social care in helping prevent unnecessary hospital and care home admission is a key theme of this and the wider Programme.

Our review of evidence has highlighted four areas where improvements or further development are needed. These are:

- ***Housing support services*** – explaining the benefits of greater investment in housing support services, as key low level services with a preventative focus, which support older people to live independently;
- ***Handyperson services*** – finding ways to extend the availability of handyperson and gardening services across all tenures to support older people living at home;
- ***Housing’s role in supporting local communities*** – defining the current and potential contribution from housing organisations in building community capacity to support older people living in the local area; and
- ***Telecare*** – contributing to the mainstreaming of telecare and supporting the national commitment to ensure that all older people over 75 years are offered a telecare package tailored to their needs.

Housing support services

We want to see increases in housing support services with a focus on prevention, so that every older person has the opportunity to access services which help them maintain their independence and have full and active lives.

The direction of policy is very clearly to shift emphasis towards prevention and services which avoid or delay the need for higher level or more intensive care and support, and reduce the risk of an emergency admission to hospital.

Housing support services currently play a small, but significant, role in supporting older people to remain living at home, with most services provided to residents of sheltered housing in the social rented sector. However, housing support does have the potential to play a much more significant role in supporting independent living for older people in ordinary housing in both the private and public sectors. Research in 2007 found that expenditure of £124 million on housing support services for older people and people with physical disabilities produced £137 million in benefits³¹

This Strategy will consolidate and extend the evidence about the role and contribution of housing support services and, through this, promote the development of further services as a part of the package of preventative services available to older people.

Possible case study of home help service for older people provided by a housing association

What we are doing/will do

We will promote increases in housing support services by:

- **Promoting the benefits of housing support.** We will publicise and extend understanding of the role, contribution and benefits of housing support services, particularly in relation to their value for money. We already have evidence of these benefits, but we are aware that more is required if older people and those commissioning services are to be convinced of the importance of investment in this area, particularly when public resources are stretched. We will use the evidence we have about the effectiveness of housing support services, together with additional information which becomes available, to inform the preparation of the 'business case' for housing, which is being taken forward as part of our work to improve strategic leadership.
- **Exploring opportunities for social enterprises.** We will explore the feasibility of and, if appropriate, support the development of services operating on social enterprise principles to provide housing support and potentially other services. Public funding cannot provide housing support for all older people who would

³¹ Supporting People: Costs and Benefits
<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2007/12/14141444/0>

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benefit from it, so we need to find ways to offer services which older people trust and consider to be value for money. Our assessment of the potential for different business models may also be relevant to providing older people with support in moving home, and the provision of handy person and small repairs services, including by housing associations and organisations such as Care and Repair.

By 2021, we want housing support services to be available in all areas of Scotland and offered by public, private and third sector organisations.

Handyperson services

We want all older people to be able to access handy person type services, either as an integral part of their tenancy, or for a charge at a level that does not act as a disincentive to uptake.

Handyperson services, such as repairing kitchen units or replacing light bulbs, do not usually form part of a landlord's responsibilities in terms of the tenancy agreement, whether in the social rented or the private sector. That 'little bit of help' is not always available to older people from family or neighbours, but it is known that without it, older people can take unnecessary risks by trying to do the work themselves or have their confidence in being able to live independently undermined. Research undertaken for the Department for Communities and Local Government identified four outcomes from the provision of handy person services³²:

- Reduced risk of falls (where work is part of a falls prevention package);
- Improved or maintained independent living;
- Improved quality of life and wellbeing; and
- Easier access to other appropriate services.

Handyperson services are often difficult for older people and disabled people to find, and there is a need for greater awareness of what is available. Sometimes, they are at a price that people do not consider to be value for money. We need to change that situation so that older people and disabled people can get these basic services, which are so important for sustaining their independence and wellbeing.

Most Care and Repair projects provide handy person services, and they are very popular. Care and Repair have an established network of projects across Scotland offering a wide range of different services, but there are many more older people and disabled people who could benefit from these services, if additional funding could be found or a viable social enterprise model could be identified.

Possible case study of Care and Repair service run as social enterprise and/or handy person service provided by Care and Repair

³² Handypersons Financial Benefits Toolkit
<http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/housing/financialbenefitstoolkit>

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One important task of handyman services is the installation of smoke alarms, which can improve chances of escape from a fire by giving early warning of danger. This is particularly important for older people, who may be less able to escape quickly from a building.

Gardens are important to many older people, and a well-maintained garden can significantly enhance emotional wellbeing. However, many people find it more difficult to manage their gardens as they get older, and they can become the source of considerable concern. Services which help people to maintain gardens, sometimes on a reciprocal basis, can be a great help to older people and also a source of community cohesion.

What we are doing/will do

We will promote the development of handyman services by:

- **Assessing the role of social landlords.** We will assess the role of social landlords in providing handyman type repairs as part of their landlord responsibilities. We know social landlords recognise the difficulties that older people face and help where they can, but we also know that there are financial pressures facing landlords. These services offer value to the public purse by reducing the risk of accidents and the need for more expensive services. Landlords have an obvious role to play, as they are in contact with tenants and other household members who are vulnerable.
- **Exploring options for extending the role of Care and Repair.** We will look at options for extending the role of Care and Repair and businesses operating on social enterprise principles, to include handyman type services.

By 2021, we want handyman services to have contributed to a reduction in the need for care homes and emergency admission to hospital, as well as improving people's quality of life.

Housing's role in supporting local communities

We will encourage and support housing organisations to play a full part in building the capacity of communities to support older people living in the local area.

A supportive local community and a strong social network are recognised as important in supporting older people, particularly single older people, to reduce loneliness and live independently at home. It is particularly important in remote and rural areas. The Reshaping Care programme has a strong focus on building the capacity of local communities to support older people living in them. Volunteer networks can play an important role here, and social enterprise can also provide a means of delivering services, while building community cohesion.

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Housing associations have had specific funding to support activities wider than simply housing services in recognition of their role in local communities: this wider involvement by all housing organisations, not simply housing associations, has the potential to support 'total place' approaches.

What we are doing/will do

We will help achieve this by:

- **Showcasing effective practice by social landlords.** We will identify the role currently played by housing providers, particularly the social rented sector, in building capacity and supporting social networks for older people and the potential for extension of this role. We intend to publicise case illustrations, giving examples of social landlords working with local communities to support older people.

By 2021, social landlords will play a central role in sustaining communities which support local older people and disabled people.

Telecare

We will encourage the development of telecare, as a key element in support for older people to live independently at home.

Many older people receive telecare services, most frequently in sheltered housing, but also in mainstream housing. Telecare involves remote delivery of care services within the home, by telecommunications or computerised services, and usually takes the form of sensors or alerts which are triggered with the occurrence of events such as falls, floods or extremes of temperature. Integration of telecare with the remote provision of health services, known as telehealthcare, is also under development. There is clear evidence that telecare can provide significant benefits for older people and carers, as part of a package of support to maintain independence and wellbeing.

*Telecare to 2012: An Action Plan for Scotland*³³ provides the strategic direction, along with support for the development and implementation of local telecare programmes. It aims to promote telecare-enabled care as an essential means of supporting as many people as possible to live at home for as long as they want to, in comfort and safety, with the best possible health and quality of life.

What we are doing/will do

We will help achieve this by:

- **Promoting expansion of services.** We will continue to develop telecare and telehealthcare through the Change Fund and local partnerships.

By 2021, all older people over 75 years will be offered a telecare package in

³³ <http://www.jitscotland.org.uk/action-areas/telecare-in-scotland/>

accordance with their assessed needs.

Conclusion

Summary of commitments

Glossary

[All to be added for publication]