

# Toolkit for place-based plans for housing for older adults: introduction, vision, and co-production



## Background

In 2021 SCIE published the findings from the Commission on the Role of Housing in the Future of Care and Support, whose aim was to ensure that older adults have a range of housing options, to suit their needs at the time that they need it. The report included a roadmap, with the following immediate priority for local areas, that they should:

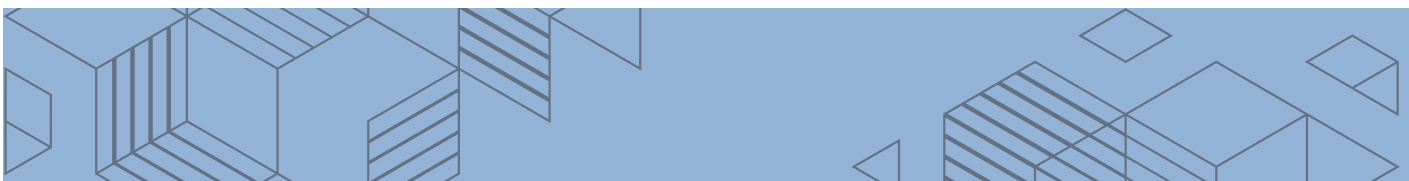
“... produce a single place-based plan for housing with care and support for older people which is shaped by the local authority, the NHS, local planning authorities, other local partners, and people who draw on care and support.”

These local plans will help local areas to better understand where they are now in relation to housing options for older adults, where they would like to be, and identify their next steps and priorities in order to get there.

The 2021 Adult Social Care White Paper emphasised the importance of housing in relation to health and social care in relation to policy making, stating that “every decision about care is also a decision about housing” and that people should have a good choice of alternative housing and support options. The White Paper specifically states that the government will “enable all local areas to agree a plan embedding housing in broader health and care strategies, including investing in jointly commissioned services”, highlighting that housing that better meets future care and support needs cannot be achieved by the adult social care system alone.

While the national policy context in relation to general housing and housing with care and support has not moved forward in the way set out in the 2021 White Paper, the need to support local areas with their vision and planning, is still regarded as pivotal to enabling older adults to live in housing that meets their needs and preferences. In May 2023, the Government launched the Older People’s Housing taskforce and it is due to report in the summer of 2024. The taskforce are considering what more Government, Local Authorities, developers and others can do to support housing for older people that promotes wellbeing and creates age friendly communities.

This toolkit is funded by DHSC and is designed to support local areas, strategically and methodically, in thinking about and creating their plans for housing for older adults.





## Housing options specifically for older adults

**Age-restricted general market housing:** This type of housing is generally for people aged 55 and over. It may include some shared amenities such as communal gardens but does not include support or care services. (Typically, C3 planning designation.)

**Housing with care and support:** Refers to all housing for older adults outside of general housing. For more information about the most common of these housing types along with some example please see [here](#). A short description of each is given below:

- **Housing with care integrated retirement community/extra care:** People live in their own purpose-built, self-contained household, while having the option to access care and meals on-site. Care is provided by staff who are available 24 hours. A range of communal facilities may be available including a café, lounges and gardens.
- **Retirement living/sheltered housing/housing with support:** This usually consists of purpose-built flats or bungalows with limited communal facilities such as a lounge, laundry room and guest room. It does not generally provide care services, but provides some support such as 24-hour on-site assistance (alarm) and a warden or house manager.
- **Co-housing:** Residents create and run their community, share activities, and regularly eat together. Residents have their own self-contained homes and private spaces alongside a strong focus on living communally, with shared spaces a defining characteristic.
- **Shared Lives and Homeshare:** The [Shared Lives](#) scheme matches people who need care and support with an approved carer. The carer shares their family and community life and gives care and support to the person with care needs. [Homeshare](#) matches someone who needs some help to live independently in their own home (householders) with someone who has a housing need (homesharer). In return for low-cost accommodation the homesharer provides a minimum of 10 hours of support per week.





# How to use the toolkit

This toolkit is designed to be flexible around the needs, context and existing strategies, policies and structures within a local area. It can be taken as a whole or different steps can be used to guide individual activities.

## Population or housing types

Local areas should decide which population they will focus on. While the main intention for the toolkit is for it to be inclusive of all older adults in a local area, with a focus on those who draw on some form of care and support, it could be used to encompass all adults who draw on care and support or a sub-group within that. Some local areas have focussed on a particular demographic, or housing types (for example, extra care only) and created narrower plans. The toolkit should be used for the groups and housing types that are most helpful to that area.

## Steps

The steps outlined are those identified as needed to create an outward facing business plan for a local area that will enable organisations and funders to understand the key needs and attributes of a local area in relation to housing for older adults and what the priorities and expectations are of that local authority. An outward facing business plan should facilitate the engagement of organisations and funders and provide them with the information they need to guide decisions about potential investment. We highlight which steps relate to which section of a business plan and vice versa.

It may be that a full business plan is not yet achievable, but a combination of steps will still provide helpful insights to guide and prioritise local activities. Local areas should dip into the toolkit as they find helpful, using the steps to build on what they already have, or as a way of getting started.

## Related strategies and reports

Local authorities, as well as other organisations may already have other related or relevant reports and strategies. The aim is not to try and encompass them all in one plan, but to build on, signpost and make all those involved in a local plan for housing for older adults aware of the range of activities that may be happening across groups and departments.

In the future, one such related activity within local authorities relates to the Supported Housing (Regulatory Oversight) Act 2023 which came into force on 29 August 2023 with a formal consultation expected in 2024. It relates to supported exempt accommodation (supported housing that is exempt from the usual caps of housing benefit level), some of which is housing for older adults. The Act includes obligations on local authorities to develop strategic supported housing plans quantifying existing supply and local need.

## From business plan to delivery

This toolkit supports the creation of a business plan and is not a guide for the delivery of that plan. However, by bringing together a housing partnership and developing a business plan, issues in relation to the delivery of that plan will certainly arise. There is an opportunity to be discussing and moving forward with changes within local planning policy and within local health and social care planning that would better support the delivery of the business plan. That will be more likely if the relevant partners have been involved in the planning from the outset.





# Getting started – vision and leadership



## Introduction

Developing a business plan for housing for older adults, is not something a department can do on their own; it is more effective in terms of delivery and implementation when everyone works together. The Commission for the Role of Housing in the Future of Care and Support identified local housing partnerships as essential for local areas to create an overarching vision and strategic housing plan for older adults, stating that any plan should be “shaped by the local authority, the NHS, local planning authorities, other local partners, and people who draw on care and support”.

A housing partnership can:

- Ensure the right people are in the room with the range of expertise needed to develop a robust age-friendly housing strategy.
- Support co-production and shared decision making with older people and the wider community.
- Help identify local data, business intelligence and information held by different partners to avoid duplicating effort.
- Make best use of capacity and funding.
- Ensure buy-in of any plan, greatly enabling the delivery of the vision and plan.





## Who could be part of a housing partnership?

Every local area is different, but some of the key groups that should be involved in local plans for housing for older adults are:

- Older people and carers, representative groups, charities and community groups.
- Senior Local Authority (LA) leaders focussed on housing, social care, older adults.
- LA social services, Occupational Therapists, social workers and community workers.
- LA housing and planning departments as well as finance/corporate resources, regeneration and growth or improvement that relates to housing and/or older adults.
- Commissioners, Better Care Fund managers.
- NHS, community health, Occupational Therapists and mental health leads.
- Integrated Care Partnerships and Integrated Care Boards (for information on these see [here](#)) or Health and Wellbeing Boards.
- Elected members: County, Borough Parish or Town councillors.
- Builders, planners and architects.
- Social care and community services providers.
- General needs and specialist housing providers (LA, housing associations and commercial operators).
- Developers and housebuilders.
- Grant makers/funders of housing for older people (e.g Homes England, Greater London Authority).



## Getting the right people in the room

Bringing together a local housing partnership can be difficult, both to initiate and to sustain. Local areas will already have some joint working and partnerships in place, but these can often be for specific delivery activities rather than wider prioritisation and planning.

To bring an initial group together requires leadership and time to be set aside for relationship building. Joint priorities should be established early so that everyone can see the overall aims and where they or their organisation fits in. Responsibilities and areas of expertise should be established so everyone can see how they can contribute to the business plan and what responsibility they will have.

Developing a long-term vision for the area can mean stepping away from day-to-day delivery pressures. Having a mixed perspective in the room can support people to think creatively about a housing future for the area.





## LEADERSHIP

While a local housing partnership is pivotal in developing a housing plan for older adults that meets the needs of the area, leadership is needed to ensure there is support and buy-in at a senior level, including the local authority and the Integrated Care Partnership.

A memorandum of understanding (MOU) could support the setting out of next steps at a senior level and to demonstrate the ambition of any plan and the development of that plan. This could be based on the national ['Improving health and care through the home: MOU'](#).

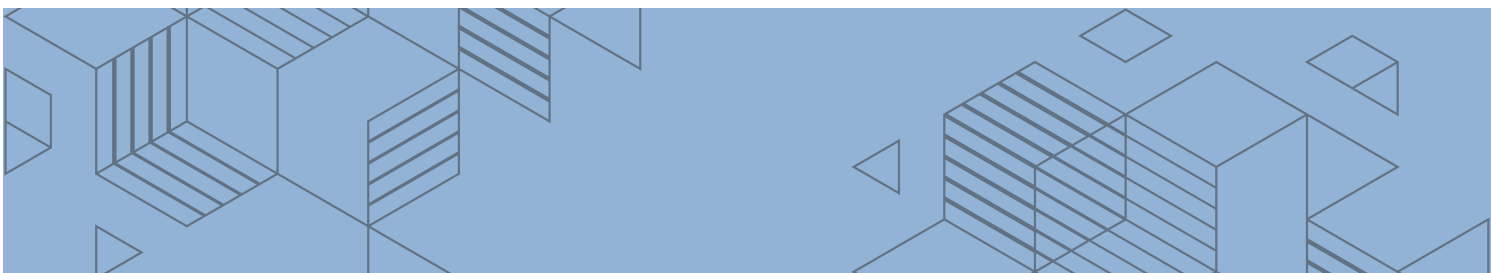


## CASE STUDY: THE 'SERIOUS GAME' FOR BUILDING A HOUSING PARTNERSHIP

One of the key challenges to building a local housing partnership is building the right network of people who understand the different roles involved in supporting housing for older people. Strategic leadership starts with finding the creative space to strategically plan for the future. One example of a tool that has helped do this is 'Hopetown', a Serious Game facilitated by [Socialudo](#), implementing [innovative research](#) led by the University of Stirling. Within the game, players take on different roles, and must negotiate how to use limited resources to maximise the wellbeing of the residents of the fictional Hopetown.

The game is an innovative method to bring together those people in a local area with responsibility for, or stakeholders in, planning of housing options for older adults, and focuses on what could enable them to work together productively. It was piloted in Southwark in October 2023 and the evaluation report can be found [here](#).

Players were a mixture of local authority and wider community stakeholders, and were split into four teams: policy maker, service provider, community group or developer. Each role has a specific aim, but groups must work together if they wish to increase the wellbeing of those in 'Hopetown'. Real life changes are made over the course of the game, prompting group discussion regarding the consequences of the decisions that have been made. This is the primary way in which the game encourages future planning and strategic thinking, generating knowledge on the barriers to resilient ageing in place, and creating a collaborative tool for communities to co-produce solutions.





Playing the game can in itself spur on the next steps of developing a housing plan by demonstrating to players:

- The increased need for partnership working between housing, health, and social care sectors.
- The need for more strategic planning for future demographic change including diverse populations.
- The way local decision making can be supported to help make future investment decisions about the accommodation choices for an ageing population.

Playing 'Hopetown' in Southwark emphasised the importance of some key ways of working including partnerships, ways of communicating (and when), joint decision making and co-production. The benefits of housing for older adults to individuals, but more widely to services and the community was reflected in players comments:

"Health, Housing and Care are all in crisis. If we can work together in spectrum from admission end rather than the discharge end for someone, we have longer to plan it."

A video of the 'Hopetown' being played in Southwark can be viewed [here](#).



# Co-producing a business case for older people's housing



## Introduction

Co-producing a business case will help to ensure that decisions about housing for older adults, priorities and investment opportunities are in line with the needs of the local community. Co-production will benefit the business case by helping the partnership with:

- A better understanding of people's vision, aspirations, and housing needs.
- Understanding new unmet needs previously not identified.
- Increasing the level of buy-in and uptake of the business plan, in particular the housing with care and support developments proposed, thereby facilitating implementation and upscaling.
- Developing a collaborative relationship between partners, customers, and stakeholders that will be key for delivering housing options for older adults.
- As well as the benefits outlined above, co-production will help the partnership navigate the different steps of the toolkit. The guidance supports co-production for each step of the toolkit, and the business case as a whole, and is rooted in SCIE's principles for co-production, presented below.

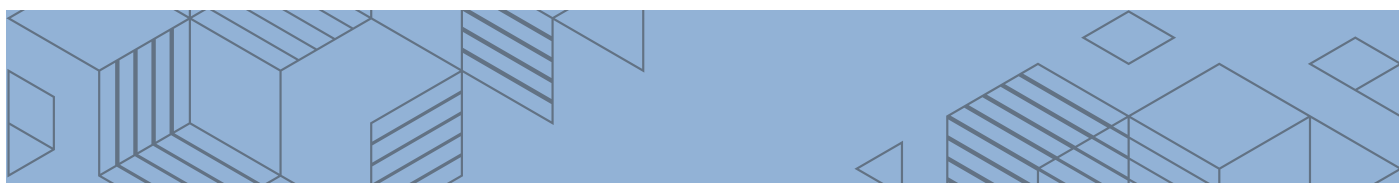
It is not assumed that those involved in a housing partnership would already be experienced in co-production and may need support and skills development. Similarly, older adults and others in the community who participate in co-production may benefit from additional support with some activities and opportunities to gain skills for them to fully engage and contribute. It may help to view it as a joint journey where no one starts off with all the answers, but everyone is willing to learn.



## Principles of co-production

### Equality

One of the key benefits of co-producing a business case is to gain insights from and share decision making power with people who are experts in their own housing, care and support needs. Their views are key to the successful delivery of housing options for older adults and their input should have equal weight in deciding the development priorities proposed in the business plan.





## Diversity

It is key to ensure that the co-production process is inclusive and that all key groups are represented. All groups should also be able to confidently express their views and the decision-making process should reflect an accurate representation of local people's needs.

## Accessibility

It is fundamental to maximise people's involvement and to ensure that individuals feel confident and motivated to fully engage in discussions and decision making. This means ensuring that individuals have the same conditions and opportunities to take part in the process and that barriers are removed. It includes creating a friendly environment, and adapting ways of information sharing and discussion to meet the needs of different groups, thereby facilitating their involvement.

## Reciprocity

This is a key concept in co-production and has been defined as ensuring that people benefit from their contributions and builds on people's desire to feel needed and valued. The idea has been linked to 'mutuality' and all parties involved having responsibilities and expectations. Putting reciprocity into practice can help to create a sense of togetherness.



## 'I' AND 'WE' STATEMENTS

To support the development of the business case for housing for older people, we have outlined a set of statements to highlight the types of co-production outcomes associated with each of the steps. Please note that these statements are illustrative, and we encourage housing partnerships to adapt them as they see fit to best reflect their local context. The statements are divided in to 'I' statements that suggest key outcomes for individuals co-producing the step, and 'We' statements that suggest actions and outcomes to be delivered by the partnership facilitating the development of the business case. This approach is based on TLAP's (Think Local, Act Personal) 'Making it Real' framework that aims to facilitate the personalisation of care and support.

SCIE and TLAP have developed guidance on how to effectively plan and run co-production. This guidance can be helpful to support the co-production of the business case and give insights on how to effectively include people with lived experience in the decision-making process. More details can be found on "Co-production: what it is and how to do it" and summary along with practice examples can be found [here](#).



## CO-PRODUCTION EXAMPLES

- SCIE Commission on the role of housing in the future of care and support: Co-production promising practice examples.
- Case study on the development of Flowers House, an Extra Care scheme, that was based on the continued consultation and so-production with residents and their families.
- Putting people at the heart of new housing development: Coproducing the place we call home.
- Taking a collaborative approach to design at The Courtyards in Preston.

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[www.scie.org.uk](http://www.scie.org.uk)

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Toolkit available at: <https://www.scie.org.uk/housing/toolkit-for-place-based-plans-for-housing-for-older-adults/>

