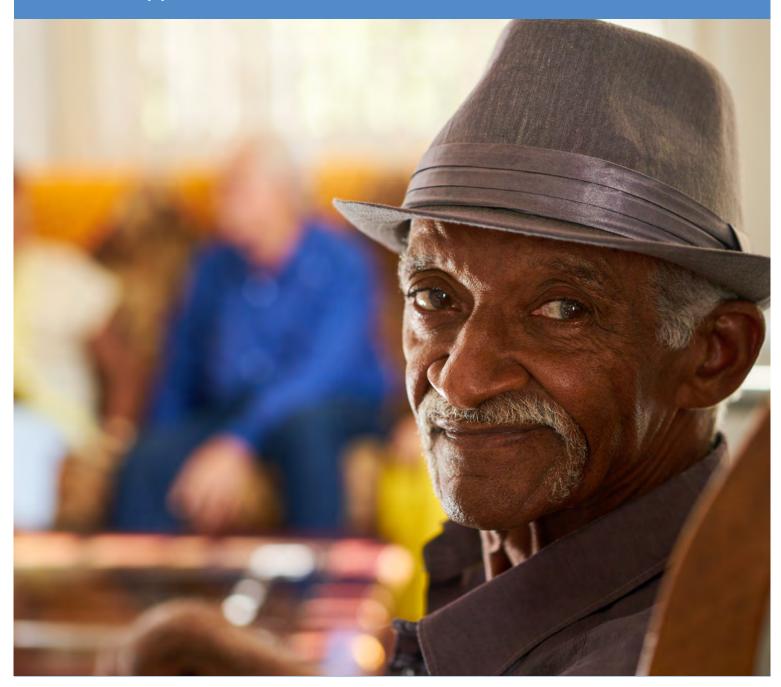# A place we can call home: A vision and a roadmap for providing more options for housing with care and support for older people (Brookmore vision)

Commission on the Role of Housing in the Future of Care and Support

This is an excerpt from the report **A place we can call home: A vision and a roadmap for providing more options for housing with care and support for older people**.

Written by Ewan King, Dr Rebekah Luff, Sanah Sheikh and Fiona Templeton

Contact **info@scie.org.uk**

First published in Great Britain November 2021 by the
Social Care Institute for Excellence

Social Care Institute for Excellence
83 Baker Street, London W1U 6AG

www.scie.org.uk

Brookmore – a glimpse at the future place

This short vignette imagines a better future. It is a fictitious compilation of perceived best practice and is based on findings from the Commission's research, including discussions with the Co-production Collective.

The imagined future is in a local area called Brookmore, a medium-sized unitary authority in the English Midlands, with a population of 230,000. Of these, 85% identified themselves as White British with 5% non-White. Brookmore has a higher proportion of people over 65 than the average for England. The year is 2031 and Brookmore has been recognised as an award-winning place to live.

Figure 7: The Brookmore 2031 vision

How did it get there?

To find out how Brookmore got to the point of being an award-winning place to live in 2031, we return to 2021, when it set out on this journey.

In 2021 the local authority established a new Housing for Older People Partnership (including representatives from NHS, local housing, care operators and providers, people with lived experience of care and support, the voluntary sector and local housing associations) to agree a long-term 10-year strategy for older people's housing. The strategy was informed by co-production events that were held across the town, involving people from all backgrounds including people with learning disabilities, people from LGBTQ+ and BAME communities. The strategy proposed a vision for transforming care and support, stating that:

> *'If the people of Brookmore need to move from their original homes, a good choice of housing and support options must be available so people are not simply "placed" in one-size-fits-all accommodation.'*

To ensure that the strategy would be properly funded, a single ringfenced housing with care and support budget was created, bringing together funding from the local authority, NHS and housing associations, which would be used to support new investments. The partnership recognised that public funding would be insufficient on its own, so published an investment prospectus to encourage investment in new housing developments, which stated:

> *'To deliver these options Brookmore is keen to work with all organisations that are involved in these sectors or are interested in expanding their activities. This includes landowners, developers, house builders, architects, landlords and care providers.'*

In return, the council, the NHS, housing associations, and the local university were offered subsidised land that was specifically for use for housing with care and support developments. The council also offered help with planning, funding applications, support with recruitment and procurement and contracting.

The strategy set out a range of ambitious goals, based on what local people wanted:

- A large increase in the proportion of people with care and support needs are living well and independently in a housing with care and support home of their choice

- Significant reductions in wellbeing inequalities for excluded groups and communities

- Delivering economic development to the area and age-friendly communities

It also included a mix of agreed concrete measures (e.g., the number, type and quality of properties delivered, wellbeing surveys, indicators for age-friendly

communities, measures of local economic impact (e.g., Local Multiplier 3) to measure this improvement.

Having developed the vision, the Brookmore Housing for Older People partnership created a prospectus which called for investment in local housing developments. The national planning regulations had changed in 2022 requiring all new housing developments to be built to **HAPPI** design principles, tech-ready and reflective of the population needs of the local community. A range of investors were attracted having welcomed the commitment set out in the prospectus to freeing up brownfield sites (including NHS and council-owned) and the long-term vision providing them with a high degree of planning certainty and hence investable propositions.

To drive the delivery of improved outcomes for people who draw on support, Brookmore launched a new long-term commissioning plan which was co-designed with local people, focused on prevention, and connected up and invested in community assets. To support this new plan, new forms of contracting were developed including the expansion of Individual Service Funds (ISFs) which gave people more control over the care they received and alliance contacts, which brought a range of housing and care organisations together to provide greater scale, innovation and choice.

Finally, in 2022 Brookmore decided to become a digital pioneer, forging a close partnership with the local university's computing department, Academic Health Science Network, and local technology start-ups to develop a new health and social care digital strategy.

Where are we in 2031?

The groundwork laid in the last 10 years has fundamentally changed the nature of housing with care and support in Brookmore. By 2031, ISFs were used to fund the creation of 110 co-supported living houses for older people with disabilities and mental health conditions, each of which was co-designed by the older people themselves. David, a 66-year-old man with a learning disability, describes how his life was transformed when he moved into one of these new supported living houses in 2028, paid for through his ISF:

'For the last 41 years, I've been living in and out of a hospital and residential care, which was often not nice. One time I was living on a ward with 12 people and there wasn't much privacy. Now I live on my own within a small block of five flats where I can get support 24 hours a day if I want. The building also contains shared areas including a recreation room and a laundry, and a shared garden. The first floor has a sleep-in room for staff.

'I definitely prefer this as my home. Everything is close by and I've settled in. I get on with the neighbours and have started making new friends. I have choice now – with meals, what I do and when and buy what I want. At the hospital everyone was in bed by 10pm. Now, if I can't sleep and want to chat to someone, I can go and see Paul in the living room.'

Brookmore has a sizeable population of older people who require high levels of personal care and access to 24-hour care, including people with later-stage dementia; traditionally served by care homes. Over time, the council has sought to change its commissioning strategy for residential care, decommissioning many of their lower performing and larger 'out of town' care homes and commissioning instead smaller homes and care homes which act as community hubs, with strong links to their local communities and volunteers. Now in 2031, Brookmore has a network of two 'community care homes', providing a combination of care and support (including nursing) not only for longer-term residents, but also for other people requiring short breaks, step-up and step-down care to prevent unnecessary hospital admission, and even information, training and other services for a local community, including a network of volunteers.

For some people, moving into new housing with care and support is not ideal and the model doesn't always provide a good 'fit'. In 2021, Brookmore already had a well- established Shared Lives scheme, but as part of its strategy it began to significantly expand the number of placements. Previously focused mainly on younger adults, the scheme was expanded to include older people, people with dementia and mental health conditions. In parallel, the council expanded its homeshare scheme which brings together people with spare rooms with people who are happy to chat and lend a hand around the house in return

for affordable, sociable accommodation. By 2031, Brookmore has the largest number of older people by population living in either Shared Lives or homeshare schemes.

In 2031, Brookmore has one of the most advanced assistive technology offers in England, winning several awards. Connecting users (including self-funders), carers and providers with the town's digital support centre to co-produce what's needed, people can now access a broad range of leading technology, tailored to their needs:

- Voice activated 'Alexa-style' devices which seek to maximise independence through adaptation of household items such as lights, curtains, heating, doors and TV controls and reminders about medicines and information about social clubs and peer networks

- Connected home devices which integrate artificial intelligence (AI) with technology in the home including smartphones, sensors and wearables to detect whether someone's health could be about to deteriorate, spot a potentially undiagnosed condition, or resolve an immediate social care need, alerting the care professional or family member when required

- Online and easily updatable care, housing and support plans and digital care records

- Virtual wellbeing and health care clinics providing remote consultations, diagnostics and tests, and online peer support groups

The analysis of population needs and conversations with older people showed that there was high demand for extra care housing (developments that comprise self-contained homes with design features and support services available to enable self-care and independent living); and this is another area where there has been significant investment. From the outset, the focus for any new development was ensuring that they were near to local communities rather than in out-of-town sites. Planners and designers were told - 'I want to be close to my friends, people or different ages, and to shops, parks and amenities - not stuck away somewhere!' By 2031, 412 new extra care developments have been built, catering for a mix of people in terms of care needs, differing lifestyles, economic status, age and ethnicity.

One such development is called **Town Square Court**…

Located as 'town within the town' Old Farm is in the north of Brookmore, with a vibrant community centre. Town Square Court is an intergenerational development for older and younger adults and includes 38 self-contained flats, 38 one-bed and six two-bed units, with 24-hour care and support available onsite. There is also one guest suite, so that tenants' family and friends can stay when visiting. In addition, there is a large ground floor with indoor and outdoor space for tenants to enjoy, including a communal space which can also be used by local people for shared meaningful activities.

The Court is managed by a self-managing team which were recruited based on their values, rather than just their education or previous experience, and they will be supported and coached by the Wellbeing Leader to work together effectively. Wellbeing Workers work together with residents of the Court to plan their support and build on their strengths and what matters to them, so that each person can live their best possible life in their new home and within the community.

The strategy Brookmore initiated in 2021 also had a strong focus on ensuring that the town's diverse community's needs were fully reflected in the development of housing with care and support. To this end, several dedicated working groups were established to work with communities to understand and identify their unique preferences, experiences and needs. In 2031, Brookmore has a broad range of housing with care and support houses for people with different needs and backgrounds.

One such development is called the **Women's Housing Collective**…

It is a sheltered mutually owned co-housing property for 30 women aged from 51 to 87. The group first came together to be friendly, mutually supportive neighbours and decided that as they got older they would like to find a way to live together. The development comprises 20 two or three bed flats which are clustered around a walled garden and all have their own patio or balcony. There is a communal meeting room with kitchen and dining areas and residents share a laundry, allotment and guest room.

Another development is **Accent House**…

A community-led not-for-profit housing association for LGBTQ+ people over 55. It is focused on creating vibrant and inclusive urban LGBTQ+ affirming retirement communities where people can share common experiences, find mutual support and enjoy their later life in Brookmore. The properties are a mix of one- and two-bedroom shared ownership homes with access to communal rooms, a wellbeing clinic and 24-hour on-site social care.

People consulted during the shaping of the strategy in 2021 told the partnership that there was a lack of information, advice and advocacy to help them decide on the best housing choices. In response, Brookmore has set up several housing and care information hubs, based in local community buildings which have advice workers who help people understand what housing is available, explore people's finances and the costs of different options and how to plan for moving home. Each hub has a network of trained housing volunteers who can provide more in-depth advocacy, advice and help with paperwork.

Like most towns in England, Brookmore has faced significant problems in finding and keeping care staff. Recognising the workforce challenges in 2023, the integrated care system and council agreed to develop a single health and social care workforce plan. This committed all providers to a living wage for care workers, created a successful cross-sector leadership programme which included leaders in housing with care and support settings, access to lower-cost housing, and clear career progression pathways. In many extra care settings, self-managing teams have been established – small groups of employees who take full responsibility for delivering a service through peer collaboration without a manager's guidance – which has increased retention and job satisfaction in many sites.

What difference has it made?

Brookmore's coordinated and sustained investment in better housing for older people has transformed the local area. In relation to all national measures, Brookmore now outperforms its neighbours and those in far more prosperous parts of the country; Brookmore has gained the internationally recognised status of being an age-friendly community. The area can now report having:

- lower waiting times for older people to be housed in a property of their choice

- reduced rates of referrals from residential care into hospitals

- high levels of public satisfaction with social care and housing

- reduced falls amongst people over 65

- reduced vacancies for social care workers

- 96% of CQC-registered domiciliary providers working with housing with care operators rated Good or Outstanding

- 85,000 bedrooms released to the market for all generations as some older people chose to downsize into housing with care and support.