


# Older People's Housing Taskforce – progress update

23 October 2023  Helen Taylor

The Older People's Housing Taskforce was launched on 16th May 2023 and is tasked with looking at how we can improve housing options for older people in the UK, it will run for 12 months at the end of which the Taskforce will make their final recommendations to the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) and Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC).

So far, the Taskforce have met with over 80 stakeholders, have visited a number of retirement schemes and they also spoke at the Associated Retirement Community Operators (ARCO) annual conference in July, Laing Buisson's Retirement Housing Conference in September and the National Housing Federation (NHF) webinar Developing Solutions for Older People's Housing and Housing Market Intelligence Conference (HMI) on 5<sup>th</sup> October. They raised a call for evidence via consultation in July which has now closed.

Their early recommendations were:

1. That the government implements measures to protect consumers from hidden event fees, as soon as possible, based on recommendations developed by the Law Commission in 2017, and accepted by government in 2019
2. That the government ensures that older people's housing is given due consideration and prominence in the forthcoming revisions of the National Planning Policy Framework.

And their interim recommendations (under review) are:

1. Agreed terminology is used to refer to the sector and key elements of the offering in language customers understand.
2. Develop a universal, independent and impartial information, advice and advocacy service to help older people make informed decisions about meeting their housing, care and support needs and aspirations.
3. Development of an overarching regulatory framework setting out some principles covering a broad range of issues related to consumer protection for older people's retirement housing, including event fees and service charges, to cover all parts of the sector. The framework might include a high-level national statement of expectations on the standards which should apply in older people's specialist housing.
4. That every local planning authority produces an Older Persons Housing Strategy that identifies the estimated level of required supply of age-exclusive housing, how local demand for age-exclusive housing will be delivered, including specialist types.
5. To consider a range of fiscal measures that would boost the supply of age inclusive housing and stimulate consumer demand.

The Taskforce are due to report their interim findings to Ministers at the end of this month (31<sup>st</sup> October).

## Key contact

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