	Older Persons Housing Strategy –
	Responses to Focus group questions
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1) **Is the term 'Older Persons Housing Strategy' the right name? What would your preference be?**

- Agreement as clear of what document is designed for.
- Elderly suggests one is inept. Language matters
- No with Older Person preferred.
- The word 'Strategy' is sometimes a phrase that is difficult to understand by older people.
- Housing for Older People

2) **RL housing schemes are defined for this project as housing for people aged 55 and over with or without support and care services. They may be quite large or small, delivered by the public, private or voluntary sector. A recurrent theme throughout the research was a negative view of RL. What would you say a great RL should include to be attractive?**

- Don't create ghettos/integrate with wider community, young and older people living together- mutual support in safe situation
- Independent with care needs = RL, dependent = care home
- Warden RL = independent living
- Care responsibility placed on family
- Create mixed housing schemes/ location important
- Retain independence & own property.
- Access to public transport.
- Not to be stuck on the edges of communities so residents feel included.
- Provision of more affordable housing that is single storey.
- Access to garden.
- Independent living/autonomy matters
- Leaseholder/shareholder model – non profit
- RL are independent living and not a care home!
- Provision of assisted living.
- Provision of help with property maintenance (changing light bulbs as example) and help with garden.
- Providing company to address loneliness.
- RL not a great concept –properties should be built so they can be adapted, and services provided to support people in their own homes as they get older.
- Concerns about mixed living not being so peaceful.
- Integration with wider community key – quite not isolated

- Design of home – consider needs of older people.
- Affordable homes needed for all budgets
- Mix of services and amenities depending on personal budgets/choices
- "Same needs as you get older regardless you own or rent"
- Homes become prisons with stair or bath risks
- IRL with some care services – good as not care home
- Equity release schemes – positive examples
- Technology/internet inbuilt in property/IRL scheme
- Partnership working across councils
- Adaptable and flexible care services for short term requirements
- Greater support for carers and family
- Parking and electric charging point
- Location or adequate public/voluntary transport
- Housing with support that is affordable all budgets
- Needs to be differentiated between homeowners and those that rent their property.
- Lack of the right type of property.
- Want to live their own live and that there seems to be a choice between residential or the 'McCarthy & Stone' type development.
- Needs to offer the complete package – DD's father is in [deleted] home, with the care package developing as his needs increase, so he doesn't need to move to another home as these change.
- Scheme you can buy that can then be sold back to the council after death, so it can then be allocated to others. The next of kin then get the percentage made. DD advised that she was aware of this type of scheme which was offered by the Joseph Rowntree Trust. Scheme where over 55's can put their name down for schemes like the one above.
- Residents committee is the best way to determine the facilities offered within a scheme.
- Scheme at Market Harborough offers a restaurant, so saves cooking and provides nutritional food. Care has to be paid for anyway, so cost not seen as an issue – going to have to pay a levy as you get older.
- Care homes have a special smell.

3) **How can ESC ensure RL promotes resilience and independence for the residents and the wider community?**

- Everyone has different expectations.
- Generate younger outlook through activities (better health) but don't make it institutionalised.
- Make people feel needed.
- Take account of age profile of ESC/need balance
- Awareness and interaction of care & support agencies – about all working together.
- Not just housing, need support services aid independence
- Choice of services needed for financially independent residents
- Councils now have limited resources – people outweigh resources.
- Difficulty in finding care support/respect care industry
- Role of 'Warden' or manager of RL scheme – sign post or partnership working with local organisations in community
- More liaison with adult social care and provision of more welfare workers.
- Housing teams to work more closely with Social Services.
- ESC to invest in support services within communities – expand not reduce staff.
- Greater inclusion of voluntary sector – free & bought in services
- Enabling services to promote independence after hospitalisation

- Support & respite for carers needed
- Good standard of space and design to make property a home
- LA provide leasehold for next generation – waiting list as per needs change
- Warden schemes give family comfort and loved one security.
- Good design enables independence
- Disabled facilities grants to consider needs of carer/wider family
- On site staff = good (security and limited support)
- Services that promote inclusion/befriending
- Independence is about having the right facilities – support rails, commodes, level access etc
- Don't agree with the philosophy of keeping people in their own home for as long as possible.
- Social Services sometimes treat people as an idiot.
- Respondent advised that through her previous role, that grant
  schemes for home adaptions were focused on the disabled person rather than the family unit, so
  no consideration was given to the needs of the partner providing the support.
- Respondent noted that current OTs perhaps don't have the life experience to bring to the job,
  due to their younger age.

4) **What do you think engagement and integration with the wider community look like, what do you think should be included? What services could enable or promote engagement?**

- An example of mixed ages community mentioned. An example of a private
  development with all properties being bungalows that didn't feel like an older person's
  community.
- Not on the edge of a town/location is key to independence
- Have local officers to put people in touch with resources and linking into communities. Fund local
  agencies to provide this.
- Voluntary sector work closer with communities, public and private sector
- Projects to promote inclusion
- Invest in community groups to provide safety net for their population.
- Key community contacts to support vulnerable/regular checks
- IRL schemes with choice of care package if needed
- Councils are siloed and should work together.
- Limited police challenges feelings of safety
- IRL schemes needed for local people
- IRL give family comfort if loved one lives alone
- Integrated services promoting care and housing provision/reduce bed blocking in hospitals
- Activities bring people together to make choices & policy
- Prevent crisis through intervention and access to services in own home
- Services sensitively tailored to local residents' mental health needs
- Security measures vital for family's comfort.
- Limited support services for mental health conditions
- Joint communal facilities that promote inclusion with wider community (restaurant etc)
- IRL – independent living – key
- Links to medical care to prevent hospitalisation (short term/non-critical)
- Space standards too small. 2nd bedroom needed for mental health of carers (allows respite)
- Sufficient guest rooms for long distance family members to use. (high quality)
- Voluntary sector links to IRL scheme – inclusion
- Security in the form of pendant alarms and check calls, with the latter of great benefit to family
  members.
- No mental support, but no one provides this – SH outlined that her husband went into hospital
  but returned home in a wheelchair due to brain virus, but no support provided when he was

discharged.
- Central information point for support services information.
- Provision of services such as hairdressers and chiropodists etc.
- Location is very important, so services needed to be close by.
- Communal areas important.
- Own front door, kitchen, and bathroom.
- Bring additional help/services into the home or complex.
- Warden plus services – if extra care required, then the warden is able to provide these. It also saves a person having to then move as their needs increase.

5) **Some housing schemes including RL have designed their public spaces to include semi shared space for gardening or growing food opportunities. What do you think about that idea in the context of an RL scheme?**

- Great idea.
- Provides space to relax and through gardening, to still feel useful.
- Space for interacting with neighbours.
- Appropriate design & citing of property to enable interaction and growing
- One Over-55's property is set up with the residents as shareholders. Maintenance of building and gardens etc determined by them. Are about to host weddings in part of building to provide additional income.
- Activities like gardening are community activities.
- Democratic decision making by residents
- Public and private space needed
- Shared space promotes inclusion & dignity via gardening/social activities
- Brilliant.
- Residents association should guide activities (democratic and empowering)
- Gardening delivers satisfaction
- Shared space for eating, not left in room
- Social activities like always done
- Design complex around a central square providing gardens and communal space.
- Outside space is critical particularly if a person needs to use a wheelchair.

6) **One of the reasons given for not wishing to downsize or relocated was due to the reduction in space to accommodate visitors overnight. Would hotel quality ensuite guest rooms rented by the night be a good response to mitigate that concern?**

- A good idea as it could allow properties to be more spacious.
- Moving from a multi-bedroom house into a one-bedroom property seen as shutting people down and not having anything to look forward to for the rest of their life.
- Providing an additional room in a property allows carers or family members to stay, but also a couple having the option to sleep separately if one becomes ill. Having a communal room could present issues re covid.
- No – guests not able to stay in home.
- Additional bedroom allows residents to be sociable with friends and family
- Excuse to cut downsize of properties i.e., single bedroom only.
- Several guest rooms needed to aid families who live long distance away (high quality
- Good, must provide basic facilities

- Second bedroom for carer or family member.
- Complex to have rooms to rent.

7) **Information and advice about support services was a big theme in the research. Where do you think such information should be accessed from?**

- Communal notice boards.
- Increasing use of technology to provide this.
- Responsibility should rest with housing provider to keep residents informed on how to access services.
- Voluntary organisations need more funding to provide community related services
- Communal rooms such as post room.
- People providing information should place this where it is accessible by all, with this moving online.
- Libraries are a good source of information.
- Unclear as to where people go to find out about services when they move into a new area.
- LA could provide webspace for vol sector to advertise services
- Central carers resource for information needed
- Support services for carers
- Advocate service to support and guide needed for carers
- Partnership working between sectors and organisations needed to protect carers
- Carers reluctant to get help at crisis point
- Central information point that you could visit to obtain information.
- Current situation finds a call going into a call centre where they don't know who to put the call to.
- Have an internet contact.

8) **What role do you think ESC can provide? What do you think ESC can do to support RL service providers build trust with RL residents, what issues prevent trust from developing?**

- Do what you say.
- Bungalows for affordable tenure as part of wider private housing schemes would allow residents to stay in local area and remain in touch with friends and family.
- Provision of extra care sheltered housing as additional support is provided by on-site staff. Occupant is a tenant and independent, rather than in a residential home. Services do include a central space for lunches etc.
- Support should be for all older people not just those in IRL.
- Budget reductions lead to service cuts – people don't believe their council is there for them.
- No help provided until it is needed such as someone coming home from hospital and requiring more care. Not helped by divisions between ESC and SCC.
- Investment in local community services
- Community Team to be led by their communities.
- More community officers so they are known locally.
- More community police.
- More investment in services to promote community relationships
- Fear of abuse if complain – charter or agreement needed
- Easy accessible info point
- Age relevant carers (dignity)
- Issue where service is being provided, but not to standard, so reporting issue could see the

provider picking on the person requiring the service aka whistle blower – needs a system of ensuring the issue is resolved without any impact on the person needing the service.
- Respondent advised the Care Quality Commission rate providers.
- Difficult for the council to be able to provide an oversight of service providers.
- Carers struggling for support, need easy access to information
- Clients receiving personal care want greater choice of care worker (same gender, closer in age)