

Older People's Housing Taskforce

Statement made on 26 November 2024

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Statement made by

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Labour

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Commons



Statement

The Government has today published the report of the Older People's Housing Taskforce. Copies will also be deposited in the House Library.

Concluding in May 2024, the Older People's Housing Taskforce undertook an assessment of public and private specialised and supported older people's housing, with a particular focus on the private market for those on middle incomes, and explored options for the provision of greater choice, quality and security of housing for older people. There is rightly significant national interest in the Taskforce's findings.

I would like to offer my sincere thanks to the Chair of the Taskforce, Professor Julienne Meyer, and all its members for producing such a comprehensive, detailed and well-researched report. I would also like to express my gratitude to the many stakeholders who contributed to the work of the Taskforce.

The Government recognises the importance of increased supply and improving the housing options for older people in later life, and we will give careful consideration to the many recommendations set out in the report.

Providing a range of safe, suitable housing for older people in later life helps them live independently, safely and well, for longer. It can enhance the wellbeing of our senior citizens and reduce demand on adult social care services and the National Health Service. The Government has committed to building 1.5 million new homes over the next five years, including those to meet the needs of older people, and we will consider this issue further as we develop our long-term housing strategy.

We are determined to create a more diverse housing market; one that delivers homes quickly and responds to the needs of a range of communities. Through the recent consultation on proposed reforms to the National Planning Policy Framework, we tested proposals to promote the delivery of mixed-use sites, including housing designed for specific groups such as older people. We have also indicated our intention to consider further planning policy changes in the future as we move to produce a more streamlined and accessible suite of policies and we will ensure that considerations around older people's housing inform our approach.

We are also working with the Planning Advisory Service to meet the recommendation of the Taskforce for guidance to provide more clarity on how planning use classes apply to specialist Older People's Housing.

As the report also makes clear, older people's housing has not been immune to the challenges faced by other residential leaseholders across the country. The Government remain fully committed to providing homeowners with greater rights, powers and protections over their homes by quickly implementing the provisions of the Leasehold and Freehold Reform Act 2024.

We will also take further steps over the parliament to bring the feudal leasehold system to an end, including reinvigorating commonhold by modernising the legal framework as well as restricting the sale of new leasehold flats. We will consult on the best way to achieve this, and consider the needs of all parts of the housing market as we do this, including older people's housing.

The Government is committed to helping older people to live comfortably and independently at home for as long as possible. My Hon Friend, the Care Minister, Stephen Kinnock MP, and I thank the Taskforce for their important contribution to this agenda.

Statement from

Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government



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