

From: [REDACTED]
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: Call for Evidence and Projects National Development Framework
Date: 03 March 2017 15:39:07
Attachments: [REDACTED]

Dear Madam/Sir

I am delighted to attached our completed response. You will note that the evidence provided is taken from the recent report of the Welsh Government's Expert Group on Housing and Ageing Population, chaired by Professor Judith Phillips. This had a specific work stream on planning and I have taken the opportunity to copy her in along with the Group's secretariat.

You will also be aware that the CLG select committee in England is also calling for evidence to inform its inquiry on housing for older people and the recent LGA Housing Commission identified the planning system as a key instrument for shaping our homes, communities and neighbourhoods. The government's Housing White Paper also recognised the needs to address the housing needs and lifestyle choice of older people.

In the light of the above, there is therefore increasing evidence that planning for an ageing population will benefit wider public policy and I very much look forward to seeing how the NDF captures the work of the Expert Group.

Kind regards, Jeremy

Jeremy Porteus
Managing Director
Housing Learning and Improvement Network

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Submission of Evidence Form – National Development Framework

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Date: 3 March 2017

Title of evidence: Our Housing AGenda: Meeting the housing aspirations of older people in Wales

Summary of evidence

As outlined in Section 4 of the above-titled Welsh Government's Expert Group on housing and ageing population report (February 2017), the planning system needs to enable and facilitate measures that prioritise our ageing population and deliver better housing choices to meet the housing preferences of older people in Wales.

The Expert Group report highlights a number of key actions relevant to national and local policy makers about the planning system in Wales which accord with the wellbeing goals set out in this timely consultation on the National Development Framework. The actions are a mix of strategic and more technical short, medium and long-term priorities identified by the Expert Group (listed in the summary below).

Summary of key issues/conclusions

Chapter 4 of the Expert Group states: *Getting planning right is crucial if we want to enable the delivery of a broader range of housing choices*. In particular, it recommends the need to:

- Articulate a clear national policy, giving a high priority to housing an ageing population in Wales. This is crucial because it will help dictate the way other related policies, not least Planning Policy Wales, are articulated and translated into action on the ground, filtering through to local planning policies and development management practice.
- Amend Planning Policy Wales and related guidance to:
 - ☐ encourage local planning authorities more explicitly to engender the creation of mixed age friendly / lifetime neighbourhoods, and
 - ☐ attach greater national weight to older persons' housing provision as a material planning consideration and to positively encourage the development of a range of innovative and healthy housing solutions, (including private sector initiatives) that meet the housing demands and needs of an ageing population and bring wider social, economic and environmental benefits.
- Strengthen practice guidance and produce tools to enable delivery. Amongst the practical measures that should be fully considered are:

- The full housing demand and need for accommodation for older people to be robustly assessed in line with revised Local Housing Market Assessment (LHMA) guidance. Such demand and need should be fully reflected in the overall housing and five year land supply requirements to be planned for in local development plans; and the specific requirements for older people should be separately identified.
- The setting of separate numerical targets for housing for older people in local development plans based on the evidence of the LHMA;
- A presumption to apply that planning permission is granted for properly formulated proposals to meet a demonstrable local need;
- Within the scope of above presumption, the formulation of criteria based policies in local development plans clarifying the circumstances in which such schemes will be allowed;
- In combination with the above, the identification and targeting of specific areas and particular sites suitable for such provision;
- The formulation of local 'exceptions policies' for housing for older people in rural areas similar to the policies already in place for affordable housing.
- Issue guidance to local planning authorities on the interpretation and practical application of the planning Use Class definitions, particularly the unintended consequences of the current distinctions between Use Class C2 and Use Class C3, and
- Develop incentives which may attract private sector house builders into the housing market for older people – to build specialist housing and age-sustainable housing. Financial incentives or exemptions from certain requirements could help overcome the fact that house builders often perceive housing for older people as high-risk and costly to deliver. Consideration should be given to offering a full nationwide exemption from affordable housing obligations (and perhaps from some other specific planning obligations too) and from the Community Infrastructure Levy, over a limited period of (say) five years in order to kick-start the market

Why have you submitted this evidence?

The Housing LIN (Learning and Improvement Network) is a sophisticated peer-to-peer network bringing together over 40,000 housing, health and social care professionals in England and Wales to exemplify innovative housing solutions for an ageing population.

Managing Director, Jeremy Porteus was a member of the recent Expert Group on Housing an Ageing Population in Wales, and the Housing LIN is recognised by the Welsh Government and industry as a leading 'knowledge hub' on specialist housing, our online and regional networked activities:

- Connect people, ideas and resources to inform and improve the range of housing choices that enable older and disabled

people to live independently

- Share learning and intelligence on latest funding, research, policy and innovate developments to spread practice faster
- Engage with industry to raise the profile of specialist housing with developers, commissioners and providers to plan, design and deliver aspirational housing for an ageing population

For more information on the work of the Housing LIN Cymru's learning and improvement resources, peer-to-peer and online networked activities, visit:

<http://www.housinglin.org.uk/HousingRegions/Wales/>

How should this evidence inform the development of the NDF?

The NDF should have a stronger narrative around Ageing in Wales and, as recommended by the Expert Group and explained above, there is a pressing need for a clearer national framework and accompanying guidance and tools to support planning locally.

This should include promotion and dissemination events with sector leaders to promote the enhanced policies and guidance ensuring wide engagement with planners, house builders; housing associations; and housing, social care, health and well-being professionals. The 4 yearly reviews of Local Development Plans provide the ideal opportunity to integrate new approaches and policies

How does this evidence and any actions it recommends help achieve the 7 well-being goals?

The Expert Group's reports that these actions will send a clear message to local authorities and housing providers about the need to ensure that we have a housing stock in Wales which is fit to meet the challenges of an ageing population and which makes Wales a "great place to grow old".

In relation to the wellbeing goals this in turn will ensure that older people:

- *prosper* by increasing the supply of housing that is suitable for our ageing population and widen housing choice across all tenures
- are able to better self-manage and build more *resilient and vibrant* communities
- have access to better specialist housing, such as extra care housing which demonstrably improve their *health and wellbeing*
- are empowered to take greater control of their housing options, including *community-led* approaches

Why is the evidence of national significance?

The Expert Group found that despite learning of a few examples where local planning authorities had enabled the development of housing solutions for older people, the Expert Group sensed that this kind of practice was very much the exception rather than the rule across Wales. Opportunities appear to be being missed. Local Development Plans

rarely include specific policies and even fewer target specific sites or areas as suitable for meeting the housing needs of older groups. We also learned that very rarely do local planning authorities seek an element of housing designed specifically for older people in Planning Obligations attached to large scale residential planning consents

**Do you agree for your evidence to be made public? Yes
(Only evidence that can be made public will inform the
development of the NDF)**