



**SPECIALIST HOUSING FOR OLDER
PEOPLE IN WELWYN HATFIELD**

An assessment of specialist housing
requirements across the district

28 November 2023

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Project number:
333100205

Specialist Housing for Older People in Welwyn Hatfield

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Executive Summary

- i. This report has been prepared by Stantec Development Economics for Swing Ltd. The aim of the report is to establish the local drivers of need and demand for specialist housing for older people in Welwyn Hatfield, and to provide an assessment of local requirements.

Approach

- ii. The approach taken in this assessment is derived from the 'Housing in Later Life' report, published in 2012¹ and co-authored by Contact Consulting. Contact Consulting work in partnership with Stantec and have assisted in the preparation of this report.
- iii. 'Housing in Later Life' provides a toolkit for local authorities in England when planning for specialist housing for older people. The approach involves an examination of local factors (the size and makeup of the local older population and how it is projected to change, prevalence of ill health and support needs, the existing supply of specialist housing for older people, and the tenure of older households). The approach culminates in an assessment of requirements by type and tenure, for specialist housing for older people.
- iv. Following the approach set out in 'Housing in Later Life' and applying the recommended specialist housing provision rates², is consistent with achieving outcomes pursued by national planning policy³ and guidance⁴ – to boost the supply of specialist housing for older people in the context of a critical need to do so⁵. It is for this reason that the specialist housing (market Extra Care) provision rates recommended by 'Housing in Later Life' have been endorsed at appeal⁶ and at local plan examination⁷, albeit with the caveat that they should be far more ambitious.⁸

Drivers of Need and Demand

- v. The scale of the older population in Welwyn Hatfield, its projected growth, the prevalence of disability amongst the older population and the number of older people living alone point

¹ Housing in later life; planning ahead for specialist housing for older people: National Housing Federation, Housing LIN, McCarthy & Stone, Contact Consulting, Tetlow King Planning (December 2012), pages 1 to 3.

² The recommend provision rates are expressed as units of accommodation per thousand of the population age 75 and over.

³ NPPF 2021, paragraph 62.

⁴ PPG, ID 63, Housing for Older and Disabled People.

⁵ PPG, ID 63-001, first sentence.

⁶ See Appendix 2, paragraphs 2.2 to 2.3, 2.6 to 2.10.

⁷ See Appendix 2, paragraphs 2.1, 2.4 to 2.5.

⁸ See Appendix 2, paragraph 2.7.



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to a need to significantly boost to the supply of specialist housing for older people from a low base.

- vi. The key numbers that frame the current situation (2021 Census based) are as follow:
- 18,940 residents aged 65 and over in 2021, predominately living in households, a number projected to grow by 34%, and reach 26,000 within the next 20 years.
 - 5,740 household residents aged 65 and over classified as disabled under the Equality Act, a number predicted to increase by 23% to 7,060 within the next 10 years, the majority owner occupiers.
 - 5,870 household residents aged 65 and over living alone, susceptible to loneliness and at increased risk of developing illnesses such as anxiety and depression; a number predicted to increase by 23% to 7,200 within the next 10 years, the majority owner occupiers.
 - 20% of Welwyn Hatfield's homes occupied by 'older households', but only 5% of Welwyn Hatfield housing is specialist housing for older people.
 - The ratio of owner occupied 'older households' to specialist housing for older owner occupiers is 19 to 1, signifying the fact that the vast majority have no specialist housing choices open to them. The equivalent ratio for 'older households' who rent their homes is 1.2 to 1.
- vii. The evidence points to an especially large shortfall in the provision of specialist housing for older owner occupiers.

Welwyn Hatfield's Requirement for Specialist Housing for Older People

- viii. Using the target provision rates published in 'Housing in Later Life', we can calculate district-wide specialist housing requirements, based on the current level of stock of specialist housing for older people in Welwyn Hatfield.
- ix. Table ES.1 shows the current level of specialist housing requirements (2023) based on supply by type and tenure in 2023 (columns A and B) and the population in 2021 (the latest available ONS population estimate) per thousand residents aged 75 and over (column C).
- x. The 'Housing in Later Life' target provision rates are shown in column D. The net current requirements, excluding current supply, are shown in column E (target increase or decrease). The gross current requirements, including current supply, are shown in column F.



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Table ES.1: Current Requirements for Specialist Housing for older people in Welwyn Hatfield (2021 population and 2023 Q3 supply based)

| A. Specialist Housing Type and Tenure | B. Current provision (number of units in 2023) | C. Current units per 1,000 residents aged 75+ in 2021 (9,357) | D. Target units per 1,000 residents aged 75+ in 2021 (9,357) | E. Increase or decrease to reach target | F. Resulting number of units in 2023 |
|--|---|--|---|--|---|
| Affordable 'Retirement Housing' | 2,303 | 246 | 60 | -1,742 | 561 |
| Market 'Retirement Housing' | 291 | 31 | 120 | 832 | 1,123 |
| Affordable 'Housing with Care' | 30 | 3 | 25 | 204 | 234 |
| Market 'Housing with Care' | 59 | 6 | 40 | 315 | 374 |

Source: EAC (2023 Q4), ONS Census 2021-based Mid-Year Population Estimate and Stantec

- xi. Table ES.2 relates to future specialist housing requirements (2031) based on supply by type and tenure in 2023 and the population in 2031 (using the latest available ONS population projection for that year). The future net requirements and future gross requirements are shown in columns E and F respectively.

Table ES.2: Future Requirements for Specialist Housing for older people in Welwyn Hatfield (Projected 2031 population and 2023 Q3 supply based)

| A. Specialist Housing Type and Tenure | B. Current provision (number of units in 2023) | C. Current units per 1,000 of residents aged 75+ in 2031 (11,433) | D. Target units per 1,000 residents aged 75+ in 2031 (11,433) | E. Increase or decrease to reach target | F. Resulting number of units in 2031 |
|--|---|--|--|--|---|
| Affordable 'Retirement Housing' | 2,303 | 201 | 60 | -1,617 | 686 |
| Market 'Retirement Housing' | 291 | 25 | 120 | 1,081 | 1,372 |
| Affordable 'Housing with Care' | 30 | 3 | 25 | 256 | 286 |
| Market 'Housing with Care' | 59 | 5 | 40 | 398 | 457 |

Source: EAC (2023 Q4), ONS 2018-based Sub National Population Projections and Stantec



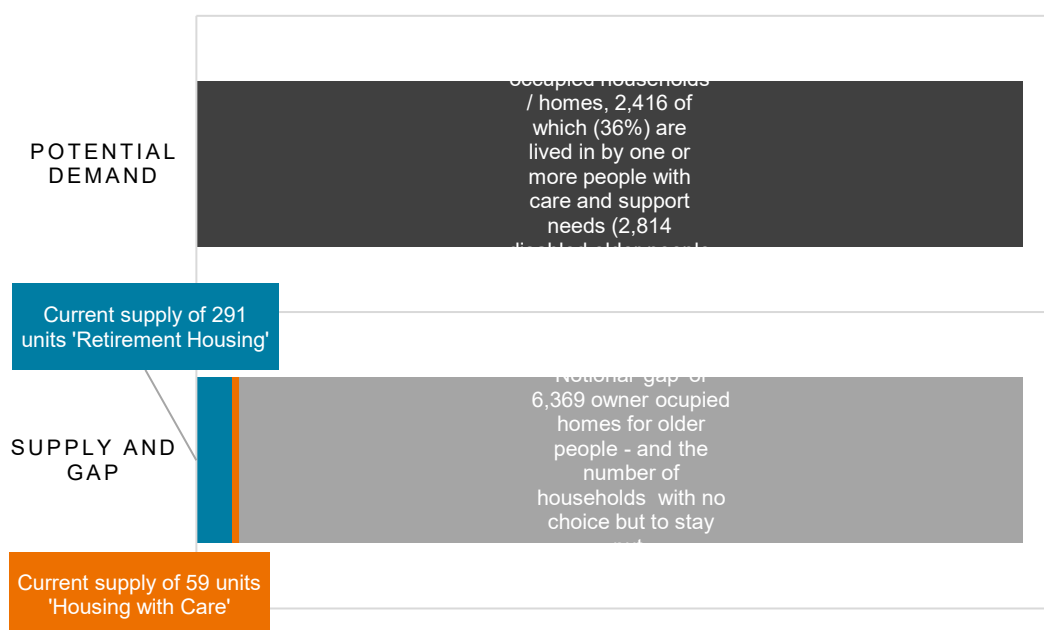
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- xii. Based on the 'Housing in Later Life' target provision rates, there are current requirements for 315 additional units of 'Housing with Care' for owner occupiers and 832 additional units of 'Retirement Housing' for owner occupiers in Welwyn Hatfield. These net requirements increase to 398 units of 'Housing with Care' for owner occupiers and 1,081 units 'Retirement Housing' for owner occupiers in 2031.

Could Welwyn Hatfield's 'Housing in Later Life' based requirements be more ambitious?

- xiii. The above requirements would clearly make inroads into Welwyn Hatfield's specialist housing needs, increasing the supply of specialist housing for older owner occupiers from a low base of 59 units 'Housing with Care' and 291 units 'Retirement Housing', in the context of a high level of need, reviewed above (paragraph v. to vii.) and illustrated in Figure ES.1.

Figure ES.1: The Gap Between the Current Potential Demand (2021 population) and Current Supply (2023) of Specialist Housing for Older Owner Occupiers



Source: Census 2021 Custom Dataset and Stantec analysis

- xiv. Figure ES.2 puts the 'Housing in Later Life' based gross owner occupier requirements of 457 units 'Housing with Care' and 1,372 units 'Retirement Housing'⁹ in the local need and demand context predicted for 2031. Compared to the position in 2021, the number of owner-occupied 'older households' increases by 23% to over 8,200. The ratio of owner-occupied 'older households' to specialist housing for older owner occupiers reduces from 19:1 to 4.5:1.

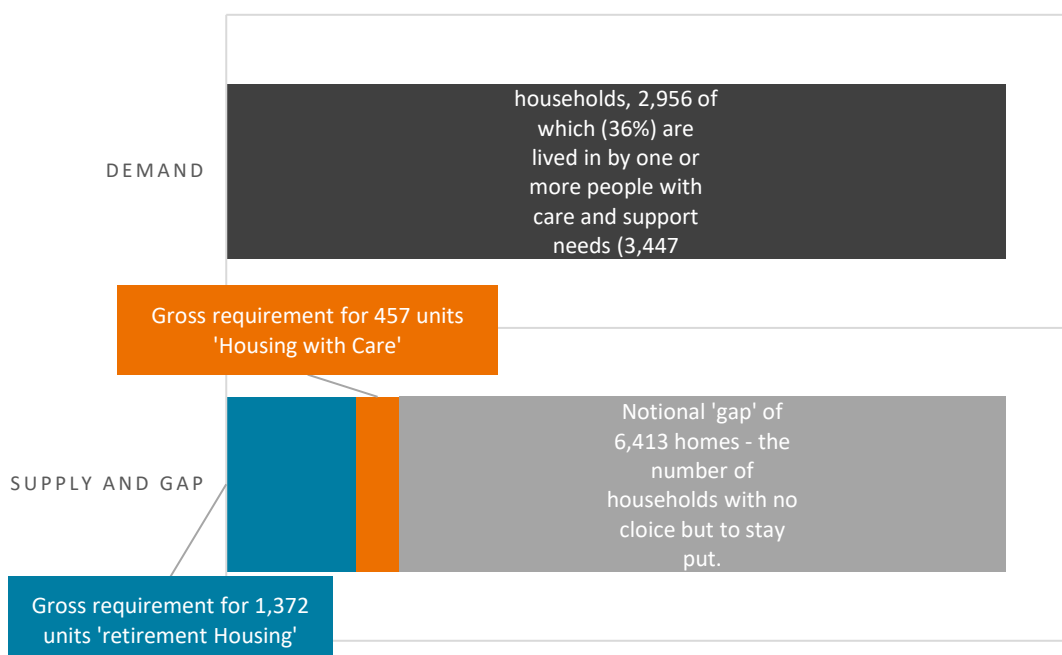
⁹ See Table ES.2, column F.



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- xv. Whilst the ratio narrows from 19:1 to 4.5:1, the notional 'gap' in supply - the number of 'older households' 'with no choice but to stay put' - increases marginally to over 6,400 in 2031. In these circumstances, there is a strong case to exceed the 'Housing in Later Life' based requirements for owner occupiers.

Figure ES.2: The Gap Between the Future Potential Demand (2031 population) and Gross Requirements for Specialist Housing for Older Owner Occupiers in 2031



Source: Census 2021 Custom Dataset, ONS 2018-based Population Projections and Stantec analysis

Key Findings

- xvi. In conclusion, there is significant scope to increase in the supply of specialist housing for owner occupiers above the requirements arrived at using the 'Housing in Later Life' benchmark provision rates.
- xvii. In the circumstances, the 'Housing in Later Life' based current (2023) requirement for 315 additional units 'Housing with Care' for owner occupiers and 832 additional units 'Retirement Housing' for owner occupiers, increasing to 398 and 1,081 respectively in 2031, should be regarded as minimum requirements and not a ceiling on development.



1. Introduction

- 1.1 This report has been prepared by Stantec Development Economics, working in partnership with Contact Consulting, for Swing Ltd. The aim of the report is to establish the local drivers of need and demand for specialist housing for older people in Welwyn Hatfield, and to provide an assessment of local requirements. To that end the remainder of this report is structured as follows:
- 1.2 **Section 2. Assessment Approach and Rationale** sets out the approach used in this report to assess specialist housing and care home requirements and establishes the rationale, grounded in national policy, research and guidance.
- 1.3 **Section 3, Drivers of Need and Demand** provides an assessment of the drivers of need and demand for specialist accommodation in Welwyn Hatfield. To this end, the current and projected age structure of the local population is examined, estimates of those who are likely to require care and support needs indicative of the population's ability to live independently is presented, data on the existing local supply of specialist housing and the balance between demand and supply is addressed.
- 1.4 **Section 4, The Local Requirements for Specialist Accommodation for Older People** establishes quantitative and qualitative need, using the methods explained in Section 2, responding to the local context established in Section 3.
- 1.5 **Section 5** presents our **Conclusions**.



2. Assessment Approach and Rationale

- 2.1 The section introduces and explains the approach used in this report to assess specialist housing requirements. National health and social care policy, enacted locally, promotes independent living to enable living well in old age. This has filtered into national planning policy, which calls for a mix of housing, including housing for older people, for which the Government's planning practice guidance states there is a critical need¹; context that is expanded upon later in this section.
- 2.2 Increasing the supply of specialist housing for older people supports the objective of living independently and healthily, for longer into old age. The corollary is that the profile of care home residents' changes; moves to care home occur later in life, care and support needs become more complex.
- 2.3 The implication for care homes requirements is that they are likely to become as much (or more) about renewing and repurposing the existing stock, shifting the balance towards quality nursing and specialist care, as they are about increasing supply. This is consistent with the Care Act 2014, which requires the local authority to ensure a sufficient supply and variety of high-quality services for any person in its area to choose from.²

The 'Housing in Later Life' approach

- 2.4 The approach used in this report to assess specialist housing requirements for older people is derived from 'Housing in Later Life', published in 2012³ and co-authored by Contact Consulting. Contact Consulting work in partnership with Stantec and have assisted in the preparation of this report.
- 2.5 'Housing in Later Life' was developed in response to the HAPPI 2 Inquiry⁴ by the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Housing and Care for Older People. That Parliamentary Inquiry found that it is vital to offer older people choice and opportunity in old age, including the right housing and care solutions at the right time.
- 2.6 'Housing in Later Life' is the only publication that comprehensively addresses planning for specialist housing for older people. To that end it provides a toolkit to assist local authorities

¹ PPG ID 63-001-20190626

² Care Act 2014, Section 5, paragraphs 1 to 3.

³ Housing in later life; planning ahead for specialist housing for older people: National Housing Federation, Housing LIN, McCarthy & Stone, Contact Consulting, Tetlow King Planning (December 2012), pages 1 to 3.

⁴ Housing our Ageing Population: Plan for Implementation; All Party Parliamentary Group for Housing and Care for Older People (2012), pages 1 to 4.



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2. Assessment Approach and Rationale

in England in planning for specialist housing for older people as a part of their overarching strategy for the housing needs, health and wellbeing of older people.

The enduring relevance of 'Housing in Later Life'

- 2.7 The issues that 'Housing in Later' Life grapples with are as relevant today as they were in 2012, arguably, they are more relevant than ever. For example, the links between housing suitable for older people and their health and wellbeing is explicitly acknowledged in the Social Care White Paper (December 2021)⁵.
- 2.8 More recently, in their response to the January 2022 House of Lords Built Environment Committee report, the Government acknowledges the benefits that living in specialist housing gives rise to; for older people, health and social care services. The response adds that the Government is committed to growing the older peoples housing sector and concludes that more needs to be done to meet the housing needs of older people⁶.
- 2.9 The Social Care White Paper and the Government's response cited above confirm the ongoing relevance of 'Housing in Later Life' as a toolkit that planning authorities can use to make plans for ensuring that older people have a greater choice of housing options that meet their needs and preferences.
- 2.10 For planners, the continued relevance of 'Housing in Later Life' as the basis for increasing specialist housing supply, is confirmed by its inclusion in recent RTPi guidance (November 2022) which includes it in a short list of '*approaches and tools that can be used to ensure plans, decisions and places work towards meeting the housing needs of older people*'⁷. 'Housing in Later Life' is the only toolkit referenced in the Practice Advice that addresses planning for housing for older people.
- 2.11 The Government is now committing to improving the diversity of housing options available to older people, to boosting the supply of specialist housing across the country and ensuring that the planning system supports these aims⁸. This confirms that it is now critically important for local planning authorities to make plans that seek to boost specialist housing

⁵ People at the Heart of Care: Adult Social Care Reform White Paper, Department of Health & Social Care (December 2021), pages 1 to 8 and 31 to 50.

⁶ Her Majesty's Government's response to the House of Lords Built Environment Committee report on Meeting Housing Demand (28 March 2022), pages 1 to 8.

⁷ Housing for Older People, RTPi (November 2022)

⁸ Her Majesty's Government's response to the House of Lords Built Environment Committee report on Meeting Housing Demand (28 March 2022), pages 1 to 8.



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2. Assessment Approach and Rationale

supply as a matter of urgency and explains why the Government says that *the need to provide housing for older people is critical*.⁹

The added value and benefits of specialist housing for older people

- 2.12 The added value of housing for older people is in part because specialist housing developments create places where care and support for older people can be successfully and cost effectively integrated. Thus, helping to achieve the Department of Health and Social Care objectives to deliver quality, joined up care that improves health and well-being outcomes, as set out in their proposals for health and care integration published in February 2022¹⁰.
- 2.13 In Welwyn Hatfield, these objectives are being taken forward by the Hertfordshire and West Essex Integrated Care System (ICS) who have published their Integrated Care Strategy. The ICS vision is focused on *a healthy Hertfordshire and west Essex where we can increase the years that our residents live in good health and lead their best possible lives with the greatest amount of independence*.¹¹
- 2.14 Under Hertfordshire and West Essex ICS 'Strategic Priority 4: enable our residents to age well and support people living with dementia' several intended outcomes are listed, including:
- i) I have choice, control and independence over my health and care support needs.
 - ii) I feel socially connected and a valued and respected member of my community.
 - iii) I know how to plan for my older years so I can reach them in the best health.¹²
- 2.15 Specialist housing has a clear role to play in supporting achievement of the outcome selected above, by providing an appropriate level of support to those in the community that need it. The provision of additional Extra Care Housing in the area will increase choice for residents, enabling those who need additional care to maintain a high level of health and independence, while remaining in their community.

⁹ PPG ID 63-001020190626

¹⁰ Joining up care for people, places and populations: The government's proposals for health and care integration, Department of Health and Social Care (09 February 2022), pages 1 to 12 and 13 to 21.

¹¹ <https://hertsandwestessexics.org.uk/integrated-care-partnership-icp/hertfordshire-west-essex-integrated-care-strategy/5>

¹² <https://hertsandwestessexics.org.uk/integrated-care-partnership-icp/hertfordshire-west-essex-integrated-care-strategy/9>



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2.16 Moreover, increasing the supply of specialist housing ensures that demonstrable benefits are realised. Extra Care Housing is proven by Lancaster University and Aston University¹³ to result in improved health outcomes and savings to the NHS and Social Services. Furthermore, it is acknowledged to free up general needs' family housing, thereby helping to meet local housing need¹⁴.

The 'Housing in Later Life' assessment approach

2.17 The approach advocated by 'Housing in Later Life' involves an examination of relevant local contextual factors; the older population and how it is projected to change, the prevalence of ill health and support needs, the existing supply of specialist housing for older people and the tenure of older households. Culminating in an assessment of requirements, by type and tenure, for specialist housing for older people.

2.18 The Housing in Later Life target provision rates for each specialist housing type are set out below (Table 2.1), alongside the aggregated position for 'Retirement Housing' ('Age Exclusive' and 'Sheltered Housing') and 'Housing with Care' ('Enhanced Sheltered' and 'Extra Care'). This draws a distinction between use classes, 'Housing with Care' typically use class C2, because registered care is based on site 24/7, whereas 'Retirement Housing' is typically C3, being more akin to general needs housing.

Table 2.1: Target Specialist Housing Provision Rates per Thousand Aged 75 and over

| | For sale | For rent | | Market | Affordable |
|--------------------|----------|----------|----------------------|--------|------------|
| Age Exclusive | 120 | 60 | 'Retirement Housing' | 120 | 60 |
| Sheltered | | | | | |
| Enhanced sheltered | 10 | 10 | 'Housing with Care' | 40 | 25 |
| Extra Care | 30 | 15 | | | |
| ALL TYPES | 160 | 85 | ALL TYPES | 160 | 85 |

Source: Housing in Later Life, Planning Ahead for Specialist Housing for Older People, December 2012

2.19 Following the approach set out in 'Housing in Later Life' and applying the recommended specialist housing provision rates¹⁵, is consistent with achieving outcomes pursued by national planning policy¹⁶ and guidance¹⁷ – to boost the supply of specialist housing for older people in the context of a critical need to do so¹⁸. It is for this reason that the specialist

¹³ See Appendix 1, paragraphs 1.30 to 1.34.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ The recommend provision rates are expressed as units of accommodation per thousand of the population age 75 and over.

¹⁶ NPPF 2021, paragraph 62.

¹⁷ PPG, ID 63, Housing for Older and Disabled People.

¹⁸ PPG, ID 63-001, first sentence.



Specialist Housing for Older People in Welwyn Hatfield

2. Assessment Approach and Rationale

housing (market Extra Care) provision rates recommended by 'Housing in Later Life' have been endorsed at appeal¹⁹ and at local plan examination²⁰, albeit with the caveat that they should be far more ambitious.²¹

- 2.20 The extent to which the Housing in Later Life provision rates should be more ambitious is best understood by reference to local factors, such as the scale of the older population indicators of need, tenure preference, household composition and the housing stock profile.
- 2.21 Section 3 of this report examines the above factors and comments on the local balance between the demand for and supply of specialist housing for older people, providing a framework for understanding availability and the choices open to older householders.
- 2.22 The appendices to this report provide a more detailed examination of national planning policy and guidance, other related Government policy, the benefits associated with specialist housing, relevant appeal decisions and local planning policy.

¹⁹ See Appendix 2, paragraphs 2.2 to 2.3, 2.6 to 2.10.

²⁰ See Appendix 2, paragraphs 2.1, 2.4 to 2.5.

²¹ See Appendix 2, paragraph 2.7.



3. Drivers of need and demand

3.1 This section aims to provide a picture of local need for and provision of specialist housing in Welwyn Hatfield. To this end, the current and projected age structure of the local population is examined, estimates of those who are likely to require care and support needs indicative of the population's ability to live independently is presented, as is data on the existing local supply of specialist housing.

3.2 The data used is sourced from the 2021 Census, mid-year population estimates and projections published by the Office for National Statistics (ONS), the Council Tax Base and data on specialist accommodation stock published by the Elderly Accommodation Counsel (EAC).

Welwyn Hatfield's older population

3.3 Welwyn Hatfield's older population (usual residents aged 65 and over) is growing significantly, in absolute and relative terms. In 2021, Welwyn Hatfield's 18,937 older residents accounted for 16% of the total population, having grown by 2,200 since 2001 (13%).

3.4 Over the 20-year period 2021 to 2041, Welwyn Hatfield's older population is projected to grow at a much greater rate, by 34%²², in the context of total population growth of 7%. In 2041, Welwyn Hatfield's older population is projected to number 26,000, 55% greater than in 2001.

3.5 To illustrate the past and projected growth in Welwyn Hatfield's older population Figure 3.1 shows the number of residents aged 65 and over, by age group in 2001 and every 10-year interval to 2041, according to the latest official (ONS) estimates and projections.

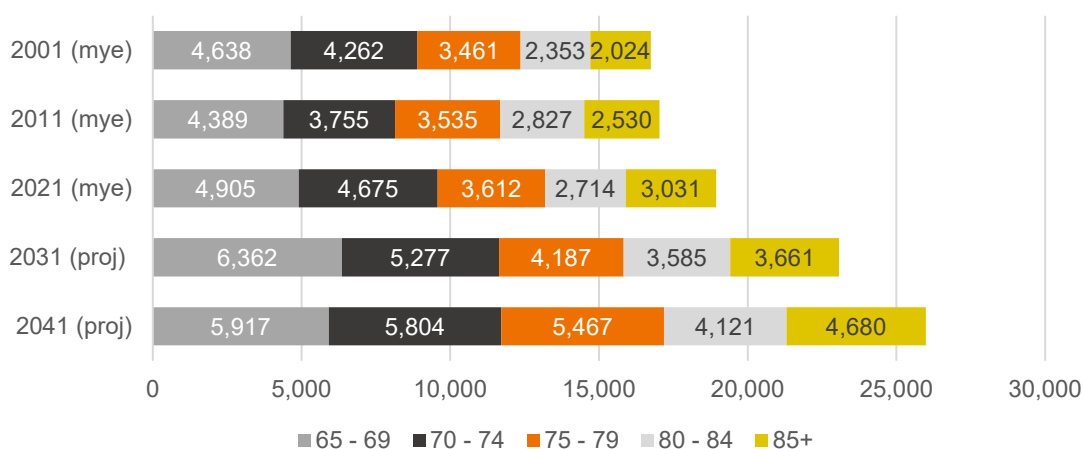
3.6 Overall growth in the population aged 65 and over is driven by growth in all age groups over this age, with the 75 to 79 and over 85 years age group olds showing consistent increases, decade on decade, underpinning the decade on decade ageing of Welwyn Hatfield's population aged 65 and over.

²² That is, 34% greater than the projected number of people aged 65 and over in 2021 (19,430). Note that the Census-based mid-year 2021 estimate (18,940 (rounded)) is marginally smaller (2.5%) than was projected for 2021 (19,430). It is correct to say that the population aged 65 and over is projected to increase by 34% (because that is the projected increase), even though the 2041 projection (26,000) turns out to be 37% greater than the 2021 mid-year estimate.



Specialist Housing for Older People in Welwyn Hatfield
3. Drivers of need and Demand

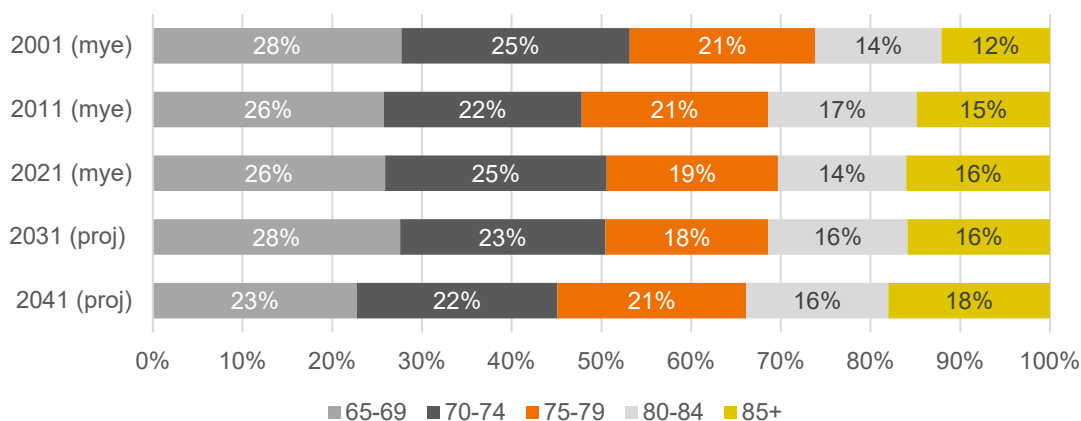
Figure 3.1: Population aged 65 and over by age group, at 10-year intervals, 2001 to 2041



Source: ONS Mid-Year Estimates (2001, 2011 and 2021) and ONS 2018-based Projections (2031 and 2041)

3.7 The past and projected ageing of Welwyn Hatfield’s older population is illustrated in Figure 3.2. Growth in the share of the older population aged 85 and over is notable, as is the decline in the share of older people aged 65 to 69.

Figure 3.2: Population aged 65 and over, age structure (%of total) at 10-year intervals, 2001 to 2041



Source: ONS Mid-Year Estimates (2001, 2011 and 2021) and ONS 2018-based Projections (2031 and 2041)

3.8 Reflecting on the scale of Welwyn Hatfield’s population aged 65 and over and its changing age structure, we can make some observations about specialist housing need, based on experience and current typologies.

3.9 Typically, the majority of the population aged 65 to 74 will live in general needs housing, perhaps with some adaptations, or ‘Retirement Housing’, in both cases with care needs



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3. Drivers of need and Demand

addressed by domiciliary care providers, which is very often a stretched service. The population aged 65 to 64 are projected to increase by 22% from 2021 to 2041 (c. 2,100).

- 3.10 To continue living independently, the population aged 75 to 84 is more likely to need or seek a move to 'Housing with Care', for example because their care needs have increased, and their current home is no longer suitable. Accordingly, we would expect growth in this age group to drive an increase in demand for 'Housing with Care', however, moves to and demand for this type of specialist accommodation is typically constrained by scarce available supply. The population aged 75 to 84 are projected to increase by 52% (c. 3,300) from 2021 to 2041.
- 3.11 Finally, the population aged 85 and over is the age group is likely to have the most intensive and complex care requirements and are likely to make up the greater part of Welwyn Hatfield's care and nursing home population. The population aged 85 and over are projected to grow by 54% from 2021 to 2041 (c. 1,600).
- 3.12 The age-related specialist housing typology described above helps to explain why different types of accommodations might be required at different life stages, for example as care and support need increase and become more complex with age.
- 3.13 Whilst age is a useful indicator, the care and support needs of the older population and their ability to live independently cannot reliably be predicted by reference solely to age. Data relating to health and its effect on functional capacity provide further insights.

Indicators of need for support and care

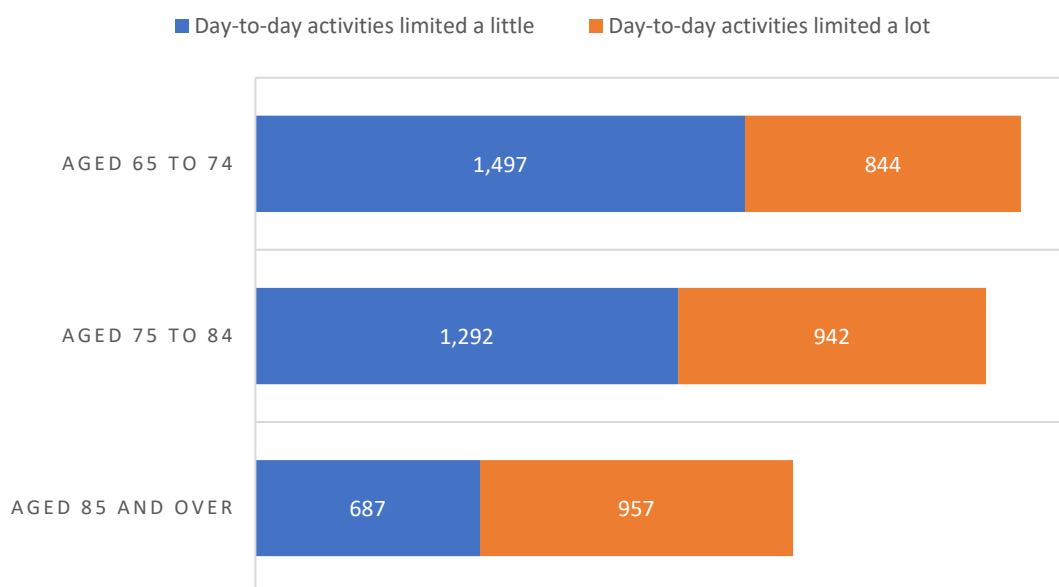
- 3.14 The 2021 Census categorises people who assessed their day-to-day activities as limited by long-term physical or mental health conditions or illnesses as disabled. This definition of a disabled person meets the harmonised standard for measuring disability and is in line with the Equality Act (2010).
- 3.15 Figure 3.3 shows the number of Welwyn Hatfield usual residents (including the communal population living in Care and Nursing Homes) aged 65 to 74, 75 to 84 and 85 years and over, who are classified as disabled under the Equality Act, 2010.



Specialist Housing for Older People in Welwyn Hatfield

3. Drivers of need and Demand

Figure 3.3: All usual residents, disabled under the Equality Act, by Older Age Group, 2021



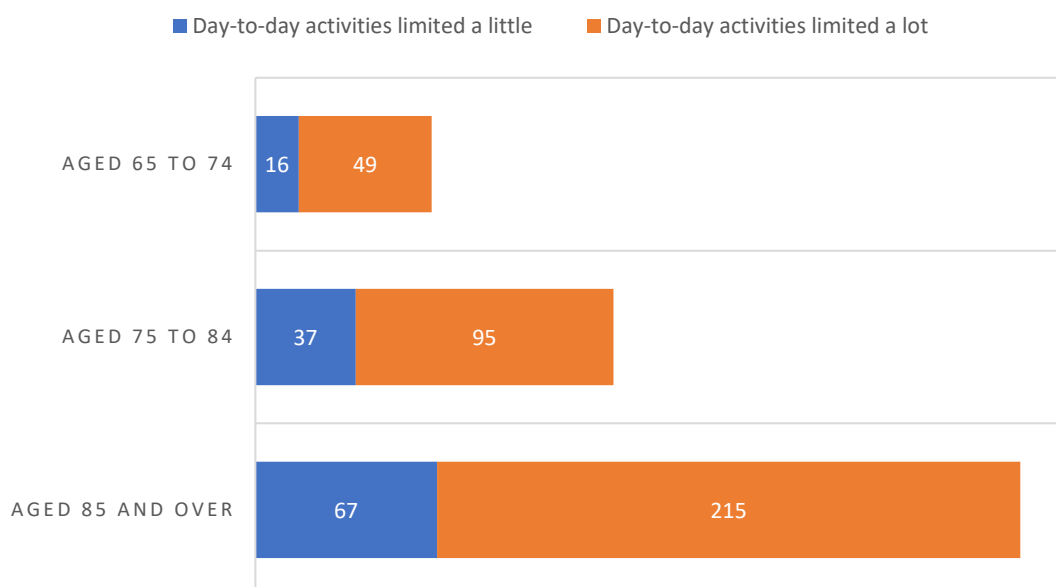
Source: 2021 Census Custom Dataset

- 3.16 It is evident that the incidence of 'day-to-day activities limited a lot' increases with age. 6,219 Welwyn Hatfield usual residents aged 65 and over (one third of the total), are classified as disabled in 2021. All are likely to require a greater level of care and support in order to continue living independently, than the remainder of the population in this age group. The 2,743 who assess their 'day-to-day activities' as limited a lot are likely to require the highest level of care and support.
- 3.17 The 2021 Census records that about 3% of Welwyn Hatfield's usual resident older population (530 residents aged 65 and over in total) live in communal establishments (e.g., Care and Nursing Homes). 90% (477) are disabled under the Equality Act (see Figure 3.4), 75% of whom assess their day-to-day activities to be limited a lot. Evidently, the vast majority of Welwyn Hatfield's older population with a disability live independently in their own homes.



Specialist Housing for Older People in Welwyn Hatfield 3. Drivers of need and Demand

Figure 3.4: All usual residents in communal establishments, disabled under the Equality Act, by Older Age Groups, 2021



Source: 2021 Census Custom Dataset

- 3.18 'Day to day activities' is a broad ranging term that encompasses Instrumental Activities of Daily Living (IADLs) and Activities of Daily Living (ADLs). IADLs are activities which, while not fundamental to functioning, are important aspects of living independently and achieving a good quality of life, such as paying bills, getting out of the house, food shopping and doing routine housework or laundry.
- 3.19 ADLs are activities relating to personal care and mobility about the home that are basic (fundamental) to daily living, such as washing, dressing, getting in and out of bed, getting around indoors, up and down stairs, eating and taking medicine, going outdoors and walking down the road.
- 3.20 The older population of Welwyn Hatfield whose day-to-day activities are limited will inevitably need help with one, or more IADLs and or ADLs, creating a diverse range of support needs in a range of settings. The limitations this puts on their lives will vary from a little to a lot.
- 3.21 Specialist housing for older people is designed to minimise these limitations and reduce associated risks of harm. For some, this, being part of a community, perhaps alongside the ability to easily summon help, will be all they require. Whereas others will routinely require access to care and support, available 24/7 so that they can continue to live independently. Specialist housing with care is designed to meet this need.



Specialist Housing for Older People in Welwyn Hatfield

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3.22 The number of older household residents in Welwyn Hatfield whose day-to-day activities are limited by long term physical or mental health conditions or illnesses, a total of 6,219 people aged 65 and over, helps to frame the scale of local need for care and support. For many, for a variety of reasons, their current home will no longer be suitable to meet their needs and will have a debilitating effect on their lived experience.

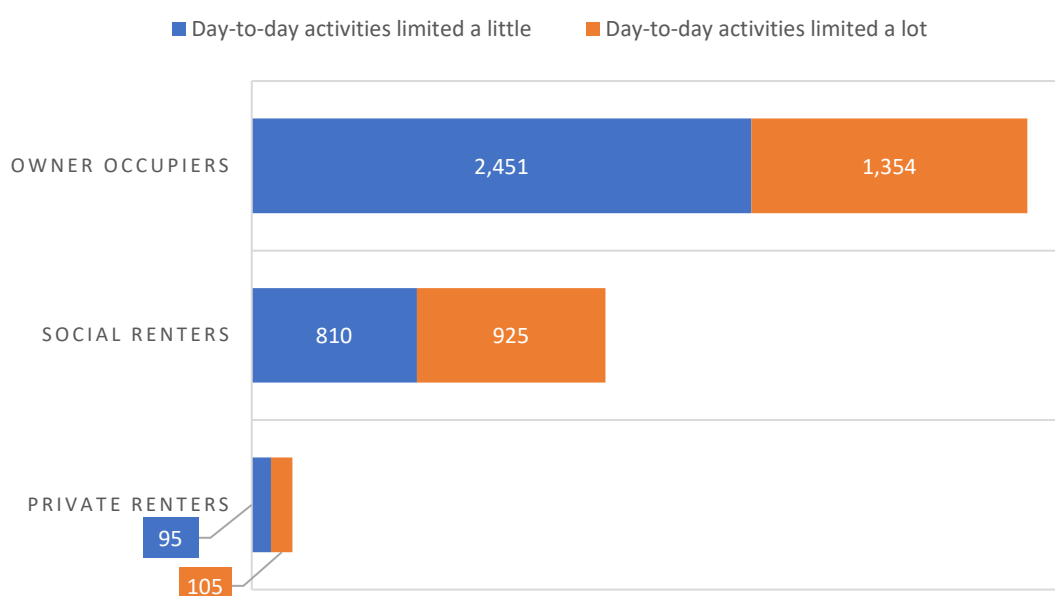
Tenure preference and specialist housing demand

3.23 Increasing the supply of specialist housing, including ‘housing with care’, designed to overcome the barriers to ‘independently living well’ that many older Welwyn Hatfield residents currently face, should reflect tenure preference, if it is to be an attractive potential move for older people.

3.24 Data from the 2021 Census reveals that the majority of Welwyn Hatfield’s older household population (75% aged 65 and over) live in owner occupied households, the remainder living in either social rented housing (21%) or privately rented (4%) homes.

3.25 In total, 3,805 older residents living in owner occupied homes (two thirds of all older household residents) have a disability, according to the 2021 Census (see figure 3.5). The compares to 1,735 older residents in social rented households (30% of all older household residents) and 200 in private rented households 3% of all older household residents).

Figure 3.5: Household population aged 65 and over, disabled under the Equality Act, by tenure, 2021



Source: 2021 Census Custom Dataset

3.26 Driven by population growth over the next decade, we can expect the number older people living in households, with a disability, to be about 20% greater in 2031 than in 2021. This

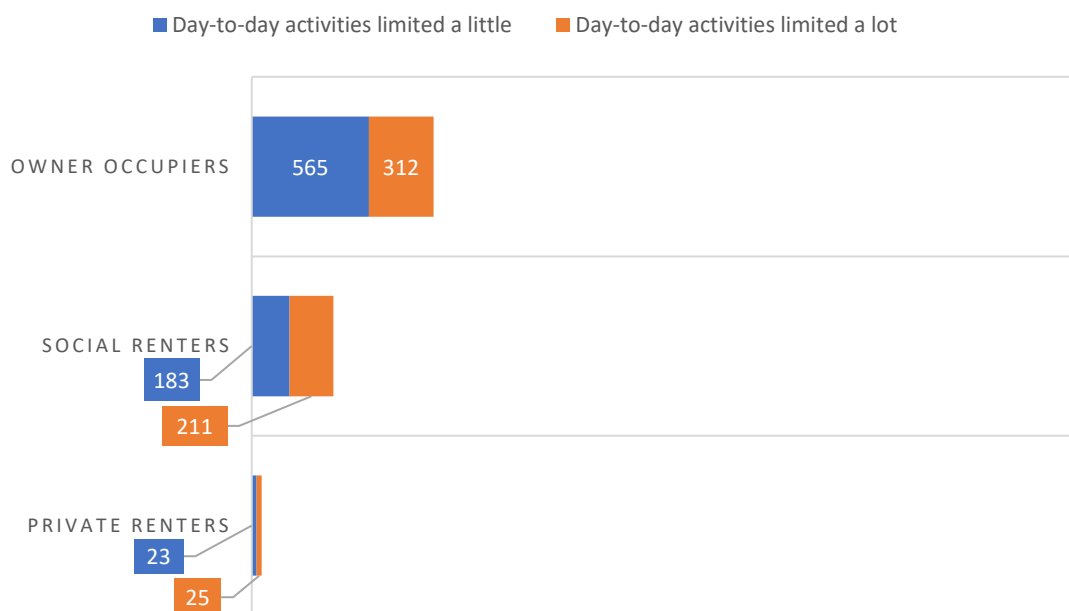


Specialist Housing for Older People in Welwyn Hatfield

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assumes projected population in 2031, and a household population, tenure, and disability proportionate to the 2021 Census. As can be seen from Figure 3.6, the greater part of this growth (66%, c. 900 older people) will be amongst owner occupiers.

Figure 3.6: Increase in the household population aged 65 and over, disabled under the Equality Act, by tenure, 2021 to 2031



Source: 2021 Census Custom Dataset, 2018-based population projection and Stantec analysis

- 3.27 The above analysis provides a further indication that need and demand for specialist housing that can accommodate needs and support continued independence will increase within the next ten years and that the greatest demand, now and in the future, is from Welwyn Hatfield's population of older owner occupiers.
- 3.28 Increasing the supply of 'Housing with Care' accommodation (extra care in this case) for owner occupiers will help to address, and would be an appropriate response to, the needs and preferences likely to arise from the sizeable population of owner occupiers who are categorised as disabled under the Equality Act.

The number of older people living alone in Welwyn Hatfield

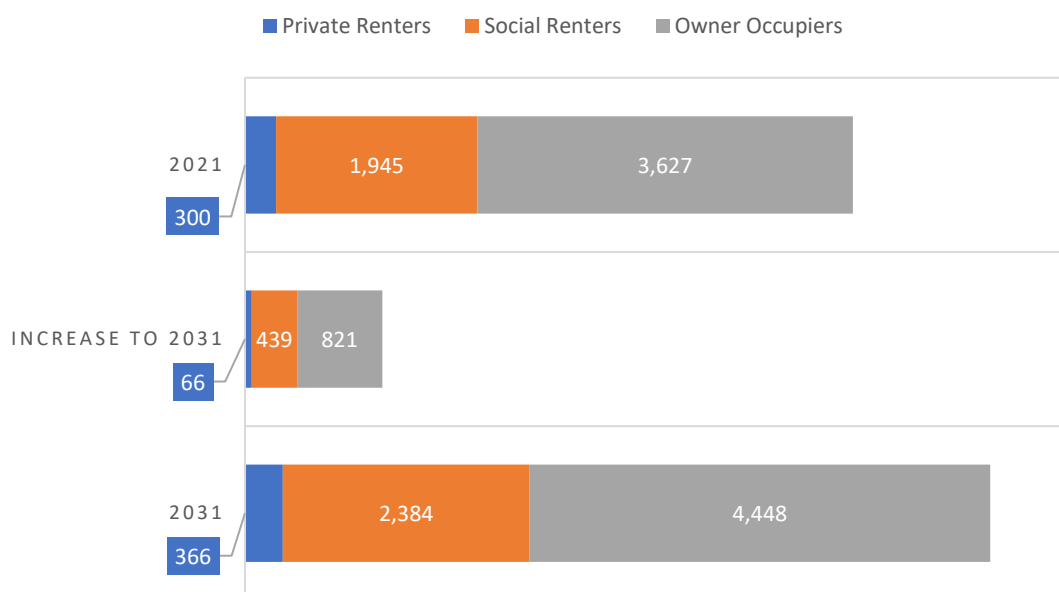
- 3.29 According to the 2021 Census, approximately 5,870 household residents, aged 65 and over, live alone in Welwyn Hatfield. Reflecting the prevalence of owner occupation among Welwyn Hatfield older residents, about 3,630 older owner occupiers live alone (62% of the total), compared to about 1,946 social renters (33% of the total) and 300 private renters (5% of the total) (see Figure 3.7).



Specialist Housing for Older People in Welwyn Hatfield

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Figure 3.7: Population Aged 65 and over and living alone, by tenure, Census 2021 estimate and 2031 prediction, Welwyn Hatfield



Source: 2021 Census Custom Dataset, 2018-based population projection and Stantec analysis

3.30 On the reasonable assumption that the prevalence of living alone and the tenure balance recorded by the 2021 Census persists, and projected (ONS) population growth is realised, we can predict the number of older residents living alone in 2031. On this basis, driven by projected population change, we can expect the number of older one-person households to increase by over 1,300 (23%), to 7,200. The number of older one-person owner-occupied households increasing by about 820, numbering approximately 4,450 in 2031.

3.31 The significance of the number of older people living alone is at least three-fold:

- Although many older people who live alone will remain well-connected and integrated with family, friends and their community a significant proportion²³ will not.
- The UK Government has compiled a cross-sectional evidence base to support the association between loneliness and a range of psychiatric disorders, including anxiety, depression²⁴.
- The number of those living alone will also, in the majority of cases, contribute to the inefficient use of the current stock of general housing through under-occupation.

²³ All the Lonely People: Loneliness in Later Life, Age UK 2018

²⁴ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/tackling-loneliness-evidence-review/tackling-loneliness-evidence-review-full-report#mental-health-and-loneliness>



Specialist Housing for Older People in Welwyn Hatfield

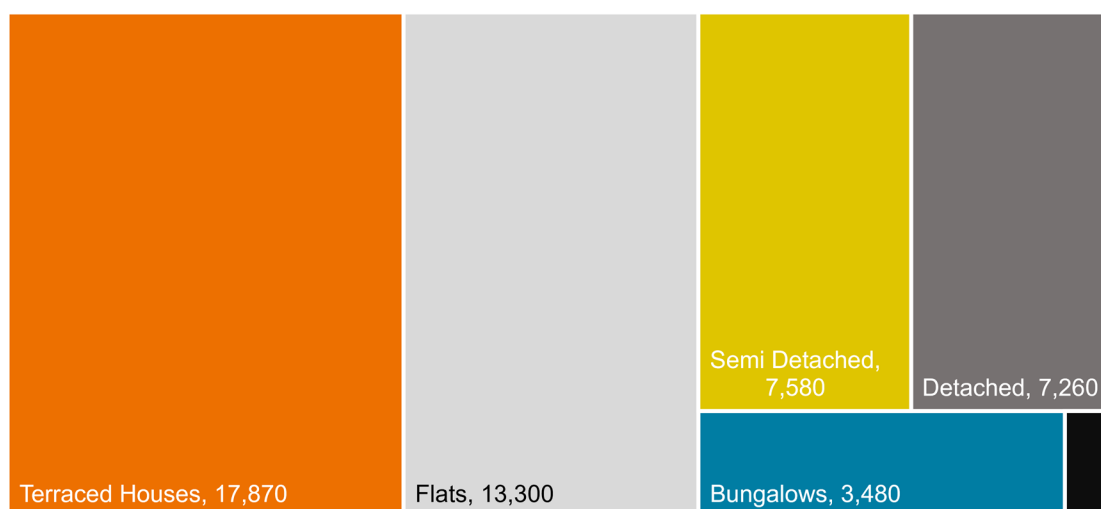
3. Drivers of need and Demand

- 3.32 A pre-emptive move to a retirement community will enable older people who are currently living alone to continue to live independently, increase social contact and help to maintain or enhance general health and well-being – as we all free up general needs housing.
- 3.33 There will be some overlap between the older population whose day-to-day activities are limited and the older population living alone, but whatever the extent of that overlap, they represent a significant and growing actual and latent requirement for care and support.
- 3.34 Furthermore, the lived experience of several thousand older people living alone (about 5,870 households in 2021, predicted to increase to 7,200 households in 2031) could be greatly improved by a significant boost to the supply of specialist housing for older people. Reflecting tenure preference, the greater part of new supply should be for owner occupiers.

Current local housing stock

- 3.35 There are 49,490 dwellings in Welwyn Hatfield²⁵ (see Figure 3.8). 2,683 of which, 5% of the total number, are Welwyn Hatfield's stock of specialist housing for older people.

Figure 3.8: Welwyn Hatfield's Accommodation Stock, 2023



Source: Council Tax Base, 2023, Table CTSOP3.1. Note: The 'black box', bottom right of the illustration represents the 'other forms of accommodation' category, of which there are 480 units in Welwyn Hatfield.

- 3.36 Welwyn Hatfield's housing stock is occupied by approximately 46,215 households, of which 9,445 (20%) are households composed only of people aged 66 and over²⁶. In the context of 5% of total stock (2,683 units) classified specialist housing for older people, 20% of

²⁵ Excluding 480 annexes, caravans and other unknown forms of accommodation.

²⁶ 'Aged 66 and over' and 'All aged 66 and over' is a 2021 Census household composition sub-category that provides an insight in the number of households composed only of older residents. The figure presented in this report includes the 'One-person: Aged 66 years and over' category and the 'Single-family households: All aged 66 years and over' category but excludes 'Other household types: All age 66 years and over'. This is because the required Census data disaggregation is not possible for the 'Other' category. Thus, the figure given here is a marginal underestimate of the total number of households composed only of people aged 66 years and over.



Specialist Housing for Older People in Welwyn Hatfield

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Welwyn Hatfield's housing stock occupied only by people aged 66 and over (13,235 people and 72% of the household population aged 65 and over), is indicative of significant scope to increase specialist housing supply.

The balance between the demand for and supply of specialist housing for older people in Welwyn Hatfield

- 3.37 The number of households in Welwyn Hatfield composed only of people aged 66 and over (termed 'older households' for ease of reference) can be compared with the number of specialist homes for older people as the basis for examining the balance between demand (or need) and supply. This provides for a 'like for like' comparison, because one household is equivalent to, and accommodated in, one home.
- 3.38 This cohort of 'older households' includes most older household residents (72%, aged 65 and over), the majority (74%) of older household residents with a disability (indicative of the scale of need for care and support) and the majority (96%) of older household residents living alone (indicative of the scale at risk of loneliness and associated health issues).
- 3.39 Thus, all the local metrics (age, disability and living alone) that provide an indication of the scale of potential demand (see paragraphs 3.15 to 3.35) are incorporated in this comparison of the number of older households and the number of specialist homes for older people.
- 3.40 A significant proportion of the older population not in 'older households' is excluded from this comparative analysis (amounting to 5,050 (28% of all) household residents aged 65 and over²⁷). Accordingly, the resultant balance between demand and supply returns a partial, but nevertheless useful, perspective on demand.
- 3.41 In aggregate, there are three and a half times more older households than the supply of specialist housing for older people (9,445 / 2,683). Evidently, in 2023, the housing choices open to most older households are constrained to staying put. Whilst adaptations can be made and domiciliary care provided, this could mean remaining in potentially unsuitable accommodation or in living conditions that are not conducive to independently living well in later life.

²⁷ See footnote 33 for the 2021 Census household composition categories that have been combined to estimate the number of households composed only of people aged 66 and over. Note that it not possible to create the same analysis for households composed only of people aged 65 and over, because this has not been adopted in the 2021 Census as a household composition category.



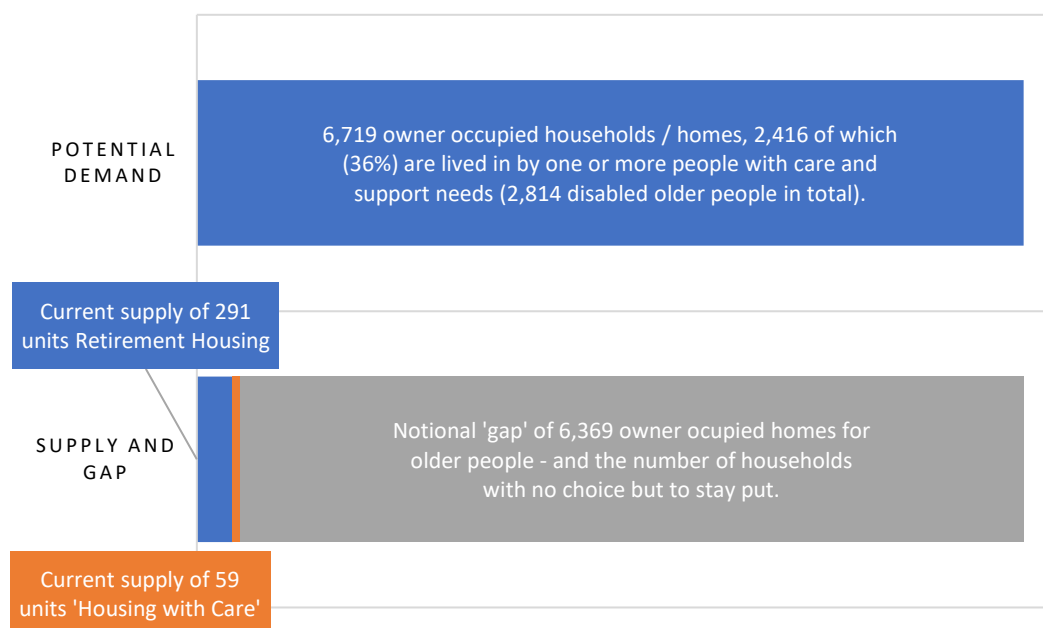
Specialist Housing for Older People in Welwyn Hatfield

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Specialist housing for older owner occupiers

- 3.42 Having regard to tenure and the prevalence of care and support needs (people with a disability) amongst households composed only of people aged 66 and over, the balance between owner occupier demand and supply is illustrated in Figure 3.9. The supply of 'Retirement Housing' for owner occupiers amounts to 291 units and the supply of 'Housing with Care' for owner occupiers, 59 units.
- 3.43 As can be seen from Figure 3.9, there is significant potential demand for specialist housing for older occupiers (illustrated by the notional 'gap'), in the context of extremely low supply relative to the number of 'older households' and noting that 36% of the owner occupied 'older households' are occupied by one or more older people with a disability.

Figure 3.9: The Gap Between the Current Potential Demand (2021 population) and Current Supply of Specialist Housing for Older Owner Occupiers



Source: 2021 Census Custom Dataset and Stantec analysis

- 3.44 Without prejudice to the specialist housing for older people requirements calculated in Section 4 of this report, increasing the supply of specialist housing for older owner occupiers, so that, for example, it is equivalent to half the 'older households' that are owner occupied would result in a supply of 3,360 owner occupier units of specialist housing for older people.
- 3.45 Assuming, for example, a one third 'Housing with Care', two thirds 'Retirement Housing', split would result in a split of 1,110 'Housing with Care' owner occupied units and 2,250 'Retirement Housing' owner occupied units. Whilst this represents a very ambitious, purely hypothetical increase in supply, it is from a low base and continues to assume that most



Specialist Housing for Older People in Welwyn Hatfield

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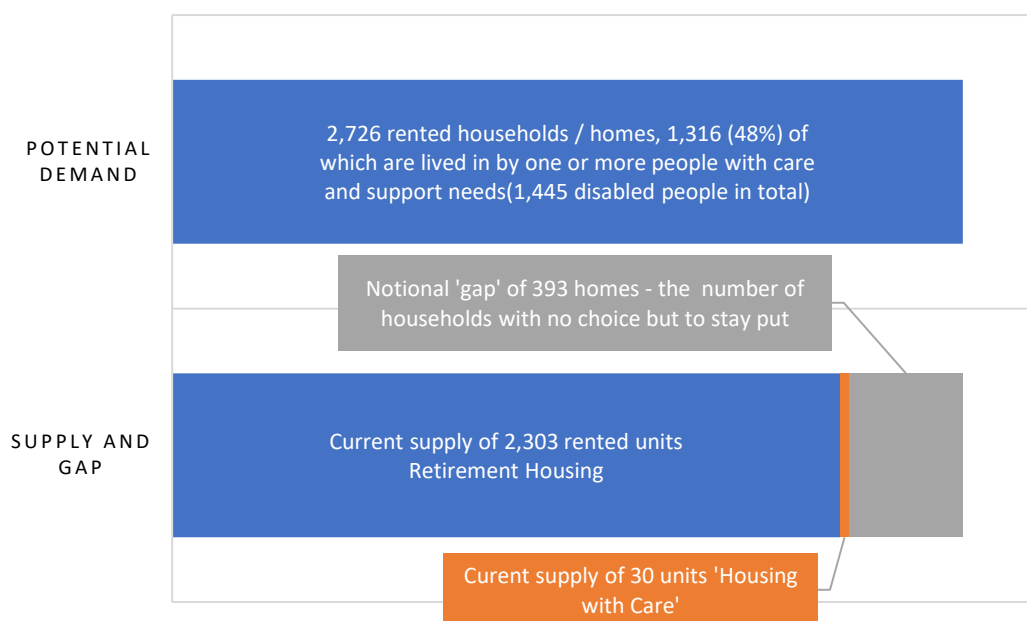
(64%) older owner occupier household residents aged 65 and over do not live in specialist housing for older people.

- 3.46 This serves to illustrate, that, given the benefits associated with specialist housing for older people discussed in Section 2 and Appendix 1 of this report, it is difficult to put an upper limit on older people’s housing needs, which are uniquely (in planning guidance terms) characterised by Government as critical²⁸.

Specialist housing for older renters

- 3.47 The supply of specialist housing for older renters is predominately comprised of specialist housing for social rent and older renters are predominately social renters as opposed to private renters. Compared to the position that owner occupiers find themselves in, the overall balance between demand and supply is much more favourable. The specialist housing for older renters’ notional ‘gap’ is much smaller, principally because the supply of ‘Retirement Housing’ is so much greater, relative to household numbers (see Figure 3.10).

Figure 3.10: The Gap Between the Current Potential Demand (2021 population) and Current Supply of Specialist Housing for Older Social and Private Renters



Source: 2021 Census Custom Dataset and Stantec analysis

- 3.48 Consistent with the owner occupier demand and supply balance analysis, we consider a hypothetical supply of specialist housing equivalent to 50% of all rented ‘older households’, split one third ‘Housing with Care’ and two thirds ‘Retirement Housing’. This would result in 463 units ‘Housing with Care’ and 900 units ‘Retirement Housing’ for renters.

²⁸ PPG ID 63-001020190626



Specialist Housing for Older People in Welwyn Hatfield

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3.49 This hypothetical scenario points to a need to rebalance the supply of social rented specialist housing in Welwyn Hatfield, in the context of most rented stock predating 1992, before the era (c2008 onwards) during which 'Housing with Care' (specifically the extra care model) became an established form of provision.

Key findings

3.50 The scale of the older population in Welwyn Hatfield, its projected growth, the prevalence of disability amongst the older population and the number of older people living alone point to a need to significantly boost the supply of specialist housing for older people from a low base.

3.51 The key numbers that frame the current situation (2021 Census based) are as follow:

- 18,940 residents aged 65 and over in 2021, predominately living in households, a number projected to grow by 34%, and reach 26,000 within the next 20 years.
- 5,740 household residents aged 65 and over classified as disabled under the Equality Act, a number predicted to increase by 23% to 7,060 within the next 10 years.
- 5,870 household residents aged 65 and over living alone, susceptible to loneliness and at increased risk of developing illnesses such as anxiety and depression; a number predicted to increase by 23% to 7,200 within the next 10 years.
- 20% of Welwyn Hatfield's homes occupied by 'older households', but only 5% of Welwyn Hatfield housing is specialist housing for older people.
- The ratio of owner occupied 'older households' to specialist housing for older owner occupiers is 19 to 1, signifying the fact that the vast majority have no specialist housing choices open to them.

3.52 The evidence points to an especially large shortfall in the provision of specialist housing for older owner occupiers. To illustrate, on the assumption that the supply of specialist housing for older owner occupiers is raised to a level equivalent to half of all 'older households' that are owner occupiers, and provided on a one third, two third basis, the resultant split would be 1,110 'Housing with Care' and 2,250 'Retirement Housing' owner occupied units.

3.53 Whilst this hypothetical scenario represents a very ambitious increase in supply, it is from a low base and continues to assume that most (64% in 2021) older owner occupier household residents aged 65 and over do not live in specialist housing for older people.

3.54 Given the wider benefits associated with 'Housing with Care' discussed in Section 2 and Appendix 1 of this report, the local indicators of need, the dearth of local supply, and in the



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context of older peoples housing need being uniquely (in planning guidance terms) characterised by Government as critical, it is difficult to put an upper limit on specialist housing requirements in Welwyn Hatfield.



4. The Local Requirement for Specialist Housing for Older People

4.1 This section provides a quantitative and qualitative assessment of Welwyn Hatfield's specialist accommodation requirements, using the methods explained in Section 2 of this report and in the context of the local analysis of care and support need and current living arrangements presented in Section 3.

Approach to Calculating Specialist Housing Requirements

4.2 In response to the challenges faced by older people, health and social care providers, and to support strategic planning authorities tasked with addressing the specialist housing needs of older people, 'Housing in Later Life' provides a model for establishing local specialist housing requirements.

4.3 This model applies age specific (75 and over) provision rates, by specialist housing type and tenure, to arrive at requirements (target dwelling numbers) that, if delivered locally, will typically result in an enlarged and more balanced local supply of specialist housing; better placed to respond to local needs, demands and preferences. In summary, the distinguishing features of the main specialist housing types are as follows.

4.4 Modern 'Retirement Housing' is designed to be accessible and visitable, might provide some communal areas, but no communal services and no onsite care facilities. This means that residents of 'Retirement Housing' who require personal care will need to avail themselves of visiting domiciliary care services, in the same way as residents of general needs housing.

4.5 The 'Retirement Housing' provision rates are 60 per thousand affordable tenure (predominately social rented) and 120 per thousand market tenure (predominately leasehold). The greater market tenure provision rate reflects the fact that typically (as is the case here) there is markedly less of it, relative to the tenure balance (predominately in owner occupied households) amongst older people.

4.6 Modern extra care housing is characterised by accessible and visitable dwellings, with a range of on-site services and registered care services based on site, 24/7, available to all residents who require personal care. Enhanced sheltered sits somewhere between the two (age exclusive / sheltered and extra care) and is something of legacy. As discussed in Section 2, for ease of reference, we refer to enhanced sheltered and extra care housing as "Housing with Care".



Specialist Housing for Older People in Welwyn Hatfield
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4.7 The ‘Housing with Care’ provision rates are 25 per thousand affordable tenure (predominately social rented) and 60 per thousand market tenure (predominately leasehold). As with ‘Retirement Housing’, the greater market tenure provision rate reflects the fact that typically there is less market provision, relative to the local tenure balance (predominately in owner occupied households) amongst older people.

4.8 The ‘Housing with Care’ provision rates combines the published enhanced sheltered (10 per thousand affordable, 10 per thousand market) and extra care (15 per thousand affordable, 30 per thousand market) rates. Because extra housing is the modern equivalent of and has effectively replaced enhanced sheltered housing, any requirement for ‘Housing with Care’ should be delivered as extra care housing.

Welwyn Hatfield’s supply of ‘Housing with Care’ housing

4.9 Table 4.1 lists Welwyn Hatfield’s current supply of ‘Housing with Care’ specialist housing developments, including current capacities, year built and tenure. In this case, all are classified as Extra Care developments, although we note that Chilton Green (ref.3) does not benefit from onsite care, available 24/7.

Table 4.1: Existing ‘Housing with Care’ developments within Welwyn Hatfield

| Map Ref | Manager | Scheme | Year Built | Type and Tenure | Units |
|--------------|---------------------------------|------------------|------------|------------------------------------|-----------|
| 1 | First Garden Cities Homes | Swan Field Court | 2007 | Extra Care: Rent (social landlord) | 10 |
| 2 | McCarthy Stone YourLife Service | Peel Court | 2013 | Extra Care: Leasehold | 59 |
| 3 | Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council | Chilton Green | 1980 | Flexicare; Rent (social landlord) | 20 |
| Total | | | | | 89 |

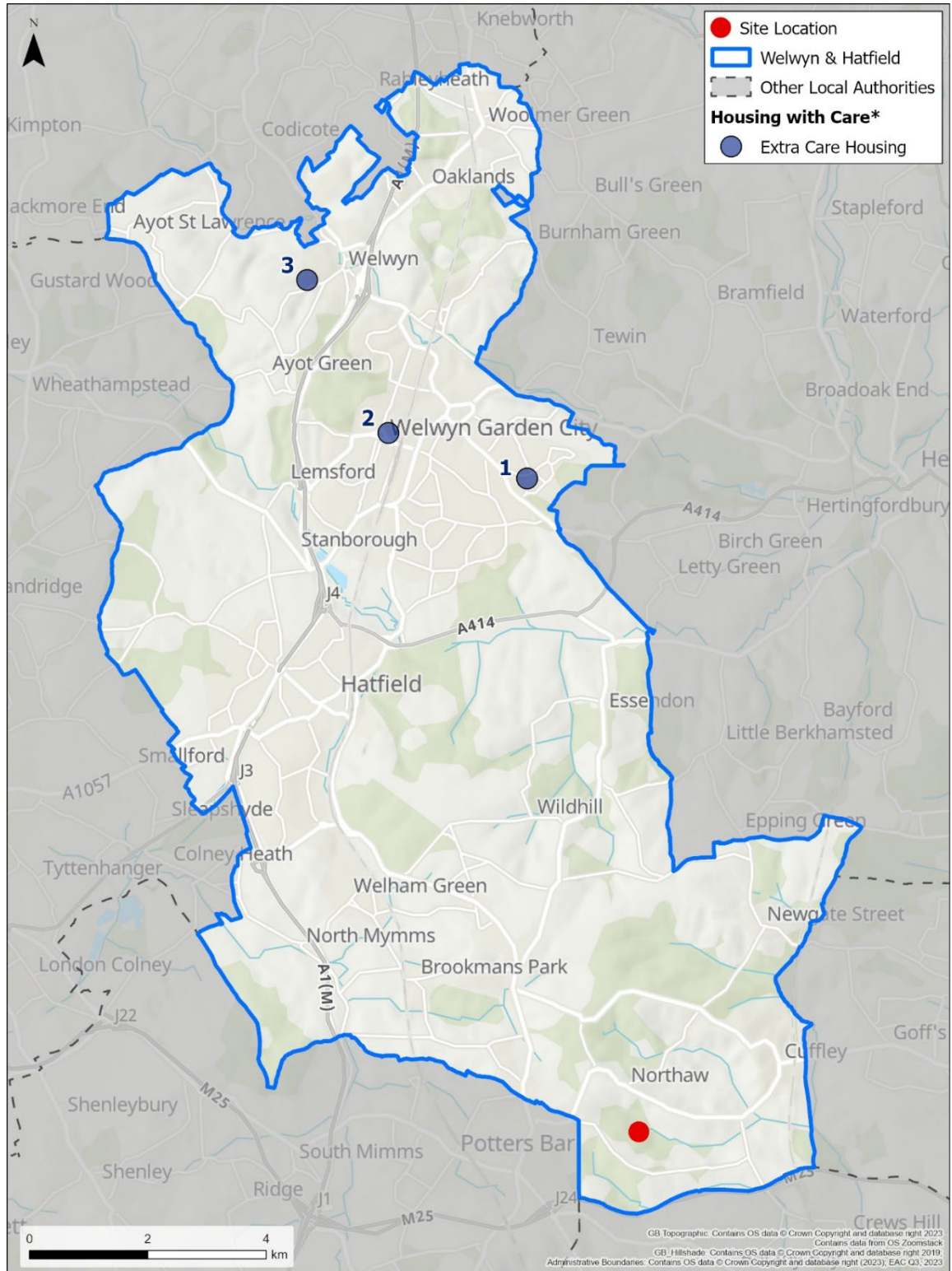
Source: EAC (2023 Q4) and Stantec

4.10 Figure 4.1 (overleaf) shows the location of the developments listed in Table 4.1, relative to the location of the Proposed Development. The existing ‘Housing with Care’ developments are numbered in order of their distance (nearest first) from the Proposed Development.



Specialist Housing for Older People in Welwyn Hatfield
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Figure 4.1: Existing 'Housing with Care' developments within Welwyn Hatfield



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Source: EAC (2023 Q4) and Stantec *The labels refer to Table 4.1, locations numbered in order of distance from the Proposed Development.



Specialist Housing for Older People in Welwyn Hatfield

4. The Local Requirement for Specialist Housing for Older People

4.11 We are aware that planning permission for a major mixed-use redevelopment of the former Shredded Wheat Factory, Bridge Road, Welwyn Garden City was granted on 15th February 2019. The development description included '114 extra care homes (Use Class C2)' (6/2018/0171/MAJ). The Decision Notice identifies development blocks to be used for C2 uses, and states that:

Commencement of development of these blocks shall not occur until details of final layout, levels of provision of care, staffing, management and supporting facilities have been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority. Each block shall not be occupied other than in accordance with these details.²⁹

4.12 The stated reason for this condition includes ensuring that specialist housing needs for are catered for in accordance with Policy H9 of the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005 and in accordance with Policy SP7 of the Welwyn Hatfield Draft Local Plan Proposed Submission (August 2016).³⁰ Planning Policy is discussed further later in this section.

4.13 A subsequent hybrid planning application has been submitted (6/2021/0181/MAJ), that introduces changes to the consented former Shredded Wheat Factory's north site, the location of the above-mentioned extra care units. This hybrid application is yet to be considered by the Development Management Committee. If consented, this would increase the number extra care units from 114 approved under 6/2018/0171/MAJ, to 250 as proposed in the hybrid application 6/2021/0181/MAJ. The accompanying Planning Statement identifies the would-be extra care operator as Audley, who would deliver their Mayfield Village product³¹. We would expect these homes to be predominately leasehold tenure.

4.14 Outline permission (6/2018/2768/OUTLINE) was granted for a large mixed-use development, including an area of the development proposed for extra care, on land to the west of Hatfield Business Park and Hatfield Station. The Planning Statement advises that '*further discussions will be undertaken with specialist operators in due course*'. No indication of scale, tenure or type is provided. A Notice of Decision dated 1st March 2022 advises that the outline application has been withdrawn.

Welwyn Hatfield's Requirement for Specialist Housing for Older People

4.15 Using the current (existing) supply of specialist housing for older people in the district as the starting point and applying the 'Housing in Later Life' provision rates by type and tenure

²⁹ Notice of Decision, Application Number 6/2018/0171/MAJ. Date of Approval: 15 February 2019. Paragraph 36

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ <https://www.mayfieldvillages.co.uk/how-it-works>



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to the district’s population aged 75 and over, Tables 4.2 and 4.3 summarise the calculation of district wide specialist housing requirements.

- 4.16 Table 4.2 relates to current specialist housing requirements (2023) based on supply by type and tenure in 2023 and the population in 2021 (the latest available ONS population estimate). The net current requirements, which excludes current supply, are shown in column E (target increase or decrease). The gross current requirements, which include current supply, are shown in column F.
- 4.17 Table 4.3 relates to future specialist housing requirements (2031) based on supply by type and tenure in 2023 and the population in 2031 (using the latest available ONS population projection for that year). The future net requirements and future gross requirements are shown in columns E and F respectively.
- 4.18 Neither table accounts for potential developments (subject to planning or conditions / further approval), that may come forward in the next ten years. In this case, we might assume that between 114 units (consented, but conditioned) and 250 units (subject to planning, in place of the 114 consented units) will be delivered at Welwyn Garden City by 2031. However, because of the uncertainty associated with the delivery of these units, we do not assume that they will be delivered.

Table 4.2: Current Requirements for Specialist Housing for older people in Welwyn Hatfield (2021 population and 2023 Q3 supply based)

| A. Specialist Housing Type and Tenure | B. Current provision (number of units in 2023) | C. Current units per 1,000 residents aged 75+ in 2021 (9,357) | D. Target units per 1,000 residents aged 75+ in 2021 (9,357) | E. Increase or decrease to reach target | F. Resulting number of units in 2023 |
|---------------------------------------|--|---|--|---|--------------------------------------|
| Affordable 'Retirement Housing' | 2,303 | 246 | 60 | -1,742 | 561 |
| Market 'Retirement Housing' | 291 | 31 | 120 | 832 | 1,123 |
| Affordable 'Housing with Care' | 30 | 3 | 25 | 204 | 234 |
| Market 'Housing with Care' | 59 | 6 | 40 | 315 | 374 |

Source: EAC (2023 Q4), ONS Census 2021-based Mid-Year Population Estimate and Stantec



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Table 4.3: Future Requirements for Specialist Housing for older people in Welwyn Hatfield (Projected 2031 population and 2023 Q3 supply based)

| A. Specialist Housing Type and Tenure | B. Current provision (number of units in 2023) | C. Current units per 1,000 of residents aged 75+ in 2031 (11,433) | D. Target units per 1,000 residents aged 75+ in 2031 (11,433) | E. Increase or decrease to reach target | F. Resulting number of units in 2031 |
|---------------------------------------|--|---|---|---|--------------------------------------|
| Affordable 'Retirement Housing' | 2,303 | 201 | 60 | -1,617 | 686 |
| Market 'Retirement Housing' | 291 | 25 | 120 | 1,081 | 1,372 |
| Affordable 'Housing with Care' | 30 | 3 | 25 | 256 | 286 |
| Market 'Housing with Care' | 59 | 5 | 40 | 398 | 457 |

Source: EAC (2023 Q3), ONS 2018-based Sub National Population Projections and Stantec

- 4.19 Based on the 'Housing in Later Life' target provision rates, **there are current requirements for 315 additional units of 'Housing with Care' for owner occupiers and 832 additional units of 'Retirement Housing' for owner occupiers in Welwyn Hatfield. These net requirements increase to 398 units of 'Housing with Care' for owner occupiers and 1,081 units 'Retirement Housing' for owner occupiers in 2031.**

The Local Planning Policy approach to Specialist Housing for Older People³²

- 4.20 The Welwyn Hatfield Local Plan 2016 covers the period 2016 to 2036 and was adopted on 12th October 2023. Policy SP7, states that as part of the overall housing target, a net increase of 620 'housing for older people' dwellings will be supported. In this context, the term 'housing for older people' encompasses a range of types, including extra care, however the 620 target is not disaggregated by type³³.
- 4.21 Policy SP7 also states that 'around 5% of all new housing delivered at Strategic Development Sites should comprise housing, which is specially designed for older people. However, neither the number of specialist housing units that this approach could yield, nor the type is discussed³⁴.

³² See Appendix 3

³³ Welwyn Hatfield Local Plan 2016, paragraph 9.1 (Policy Box) page 66.

³⁴ Ibid.



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- 4.22 On-site affordable housing delivery targets specified by Policy SP7, applicable to Use Class C3 developments of 10 or more dwellings, vary from 25% to 35%. The policy's expectation is that 'housing for older people' is more likely to be Use Class C3 than Use Class C2, but that that precise use will be determined on a case-by-case basis³⁵.
- 4.23 Given that extra care housing is frequently classified as Use Class C2, it is possible that the Council will count it against Policy SP7; 'Specialist Housing', which, despite its name, refers to residential care and nursing care homes – communal, not independent living.
- 4.24 Policy SP7 'Specialist housing' targets a net increase of 200 Use Class C2 bedspaces, in addition (as opposed to as part of) the overall housing target. Whereas, the 620 units 'housing for older people' is part of the overall target³⁶.
- 4.25 Policy SP7 'housing for older people' housing target is informed by a series of reports, namely, 2015 SHMA Partial Update, the 2017 SHMA Update and, during the emerging Local Plan examination, two papers produced on behalf of the Council addressing ONS 2016-based population projections³⁷ and most recently, ONS 2018-based population projections (203A)³⁸. The latter (203A) providing the Policy SP7 'Housing for older people' and 'Specialist housing' targets.

The problem with the Local Planning Policy Specialist Housing Evidence Base

- 4.26 All four Council documents that underpin Policy SP7 calculate specialist housing requirements by applying provision rates, by housing type, to projected growth, from 2013 to 2032 in the population aged 75 and over. The rates used are lower than the rates used in this report and they do they differentiate by tenure. In addition, the provision rates used are not applied to the current population, accordingly, current (or backlog) need is ignored.
- 4.27 For the above reasons, the Council's assessment significantly underestimates specialist housing requirements for older people, particularly the requirement for 'Housing with Care'.³⁹ The assessment presented in this report should be preferred; a requirement for an additional 519 units 'Housing with Care' now (315 market tenure), increasing to 654 (457 market tenure) in 2031. Even if 250 units come forward as part of the former Shredded Wheat Factory site, there remains a significant residual requirement over the short to medium term.

³⁵ Welwyn Hatfield Local Plan 2016, paragraph 9.1 (policy box) page 65, and paragraph 9.22 page 71 and 72.

³⁶ Welwyn Hatfield Local Plan 2016, paragraph 9.1 (policy box) page 66, and paragraphs 9.7, 9.8 page 68.

³⁷ Examination Document EX103A - Welwyn Hatfield Technical OAN Paper, The implications of the 2016-based SNPP and SNHP on the Welwyn Hatfield OAN, June 2019

³⁸ Examination Document 203A - The implications of the 2018-based SNPP and SNHP on the Welwyn Hatfield OAN Welwyn Hatfield, August 2020

³⁹ 203A assesses the need for 117 units housing with care (market and affordable)



Specialist Housing for Older People in Welwyn Hatfield

4. The Local Requirement for Specialist Housing for Older People

4.28 The expectation that 5% of all housing delivered Strategic Development Sites will be specialist housing for older people provides no certainty, because it is not supported by any evidence that specialist housing is deliverable on the sites in question. Nor does it ensure the delivery of 'housing with care', for which there is no specific policy requirement.

4.29 The sites are as follows, only one currently has plans (outline permission) for specialist housing for older people in place:

- **Broadwater Road West** SPD site and Bio Park (SDS 3 & 4, Policy SP 17 and SPD). At least 1,863 new homes over the whole plan period (to 2036), a 15-year delivery horizon. The greater part of this site is the 9.1ha former Shredded Wheat Factory. As discussed above, outline permission has been granted for 114 extra care homes. A further application seeking to increase density across the site awaits determination.
- **North East of Welwyn Garden City** (SDS1, Policy SP 18) to accommodate at least 870 homes after adoption, over a 10 year delivery period (to 2031). No reference to housing for older people in the AMR Target⁴⁰. Outline permission for 650 dwellings granted in 2020⁴¹, with no reference to 'housing with care'.in the signed 106 agreement. A further application for 215 dwellings is yet to be determined, but this does not include specialist housing for older people.
- **South East of Welwyn Garden City** (SDS2, Policy SP 19) to accommodate at least 600 homes after adoption over a 10 year delivery period (to 2031). No reference to housing for older people in the AMR Target⁴². An outline planning application is currently under consideration. This includes reference to '*no specific C2 requirement as yet, but some C3 retirement living provision may be in demand in later phases, next to the Local Centre. Specific demand will be determined at the Reserved Matters stage*'⁴³
- **North West Hatfield** (SDS5, Policy SP 22), to accommodate approximately 1,750 new homes over the whole plan period (to 2036), a 15 year delivery horizon. No reference to housing for older people in the AMR Target⁴⁴.
- **Marshmoor** (SDS7, Policy SADM 30), to accommodate around 100 dwellings over the next 10 years (to 2031). No reference to housing for older people in the AMR

⁴⁰ Welwyn Hatfield Local Plan 2016, page 220

⁴¹ 6/2018/0873/OUTLINE

⁴² Welwyn Hatfield Local Plan 2016, page 221

⁴³ 6/2022/1395/OUTLINE, Housing Statement, page 34, paragraph 5.21

⁴⁴ Welwyn Hatfield Local Plan 2016, table 19- Local Plan Policies, Indicators and Targets, page 222



Specialist Housing for Older People in Welwyn Hatfield
4. The Local Requirement for Specialist Housing for Older People

Target⁴⁵. The small scale of this development rules out the delivery of specialist housing for older people (5% equating to 10 units).

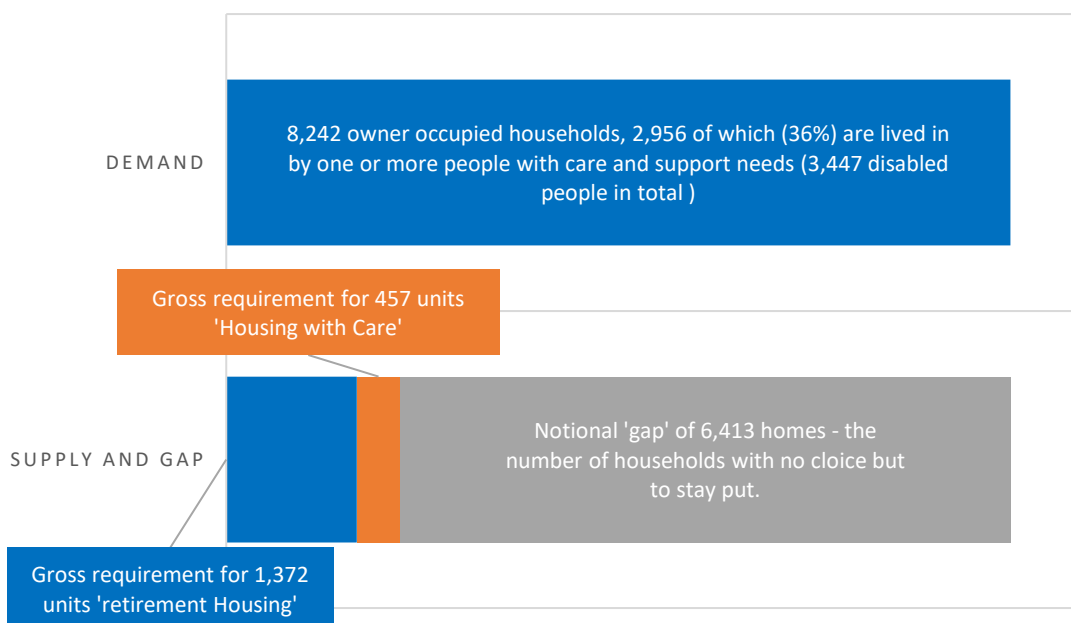
Could Welwyn Hatfield’s specialist housing requirements be more ambitious?

4.30 The scope to increase supply for owner occupiers beyond the levels arrived at using ‘Housing in Later Life’ benchmark provision rates is illustrated in Figure 4.2. The scale of ‘potential demand’ shown takes account of growth in the older population within the next ten years, which will drive an increase in the number of owner occupier ‘older households’.

4.31 An increased number of ‘older households’ in 2031 will comprise an increased number of single person household and an increased number of household residents with a disability⁴⁶. The magnitude of these increases (23%) is significant and clearly indicates that demand pressures will increase significantly from their 2021 base.

4.32 Increasing the supply of specialist housing for older owner occupiers from 59 to 457 units ‘Housing with Care’ and from 291 to 1,372 units ‘Retirement Housing’ narrows the ratio of household/ supply ratio to 4.5:1, compared to 19:1 in 2023. However, the number of ‘older households’ ‘with no choice but to stay put’ increases marginally from 6,369 to 6,413, indicating that demand continues to outstrip supply.

Figure 4.2: The Gap Between the Future Potential Demand (2031 population) and Requirement for Specialist Housing for Older Owner Occupiers in 2031



Source: 2021 Census Custom Dataset, ONS 2018-based Population Projections and Stantec analysis

⁴⁵ Ibid, page 222

⁴⁶ Assuming that the proportion of older people and older households with a disability observed by the 2021 Census remains the same.



Specialist Housing for Older People in Welwyn Hatfield
4. The Local Requirement for Specialist Housing for Older People

Key Findings

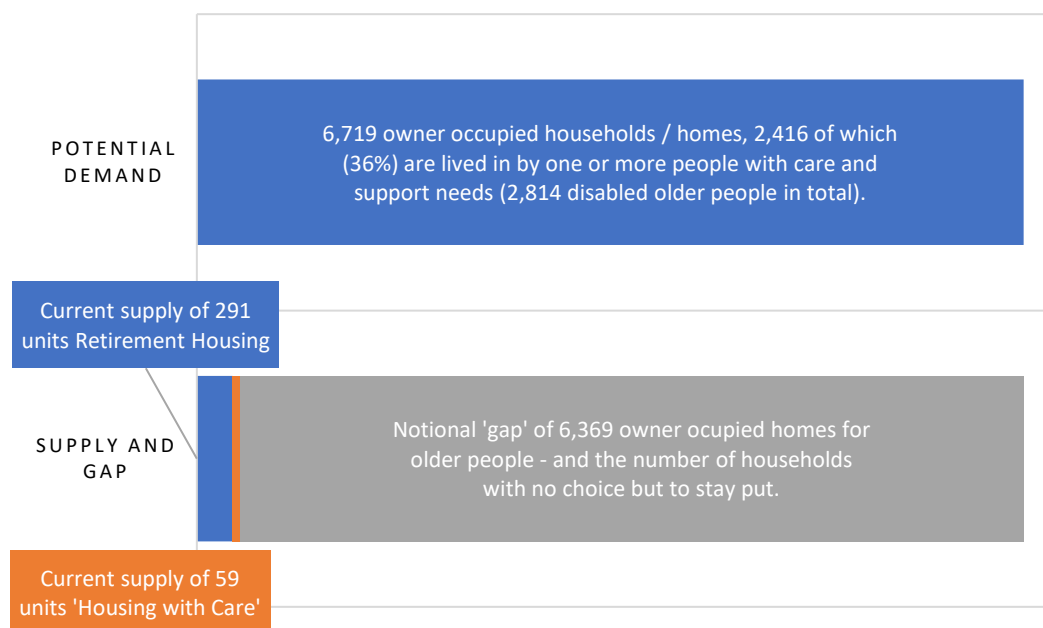
- 4.33 There is significant scope to increase in the supply of specialist housing for owner occupiers above the requirements arrived at using the 'Housing in Later Life' benchmark provision rates. As such, the resultant current (2023) requirement for 315 additional units 'Housing with Care' for owner occupiers and 832 additional units 'Retirement Housing' for owner occupiers, increasing to 398 and 1,081 respectively in 2031, should be regarded as minimum requirements and not a ceiling on development.



5. Conclusions

- 5.1 The scale of the older population in Welwyn Hatfield, its projected growth, the prevalence of disability amongst the older population and the number of older people living alone point to a need to significantly boost the supply of specialist housing for older people.
- 5.2 The evidence points to an especially large shortfall in the provision of specialist housing for older owner occupiers. The current supply of specialist housing for older owner occupiers is limited to 59 units 'Housing with Care' and 291 units 'Retirement Housing'.
- 5.3 Currently, there are about 6,700 owner-occupied 'older households' in Welwyn Hatfield, 2,400 of which (36%) are comprised of one or more older people with care and support needs, amounting to 2,800 older household residents with a disability.
- 5.4 The ratio of owner-occupied 'older households' to specialist housing for older owner occupiers is 19 to 1, signifying the fact that the vast majority (over 6,300 'older households') have no specialist housing choice for owner occupiers open to them. The current balance between the number of 'older households' that are owner occupied and the supply of specialist housing for older owner occupiers is illustrated in Figure 5.1.

Figure 5.1: The Gap Between the Current Potential Demand (2021 population) and Current Supply of Specialist Housing for Older Owner Occupiers



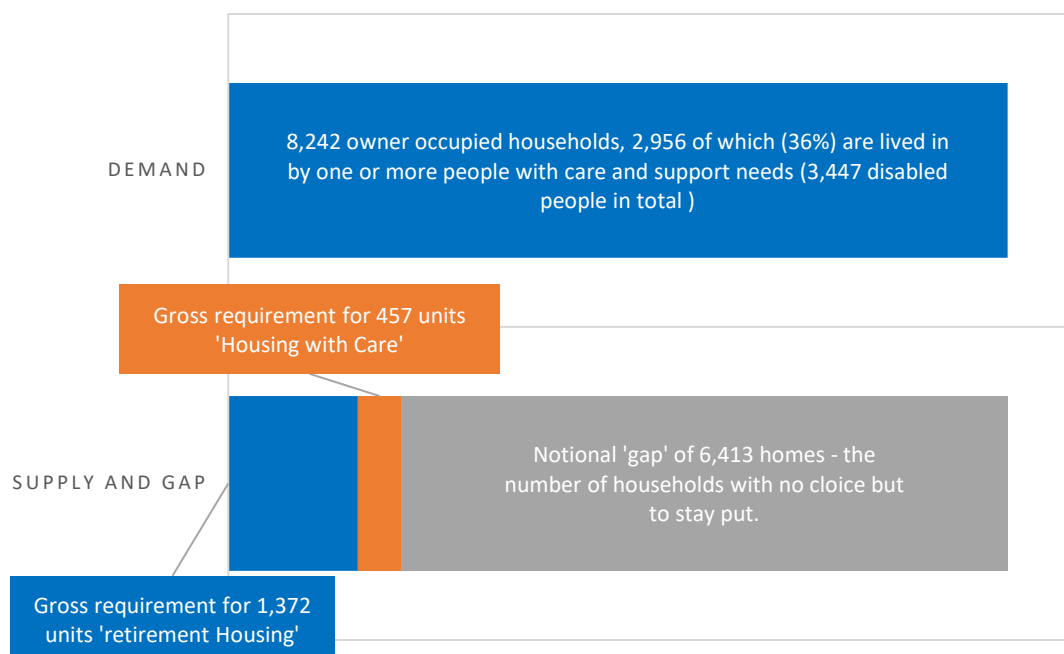
Source: 2021 Census Custom Dataset and Stantec analysis

Specialist Housing for Older People in Welwyn Hatfield

5. Conclusions

- 5.5 As Figure 5.1 shows, the scope to increase the supply of specialist housing for older owner occupiers is substantial and on any reasonable basis, an appropriate response might be to increase supply by several thousand units.
- 5.6 The requirements arrived at in Section 4 of this report, using the 'Housing in Later Life' provision rates, would clearly make inroads into Welwyn Hatfield's specialist housing needs, increasing the supply of specialist housing for older owner occupiers from 59 to 457 units 'Housing with Care' and from 291 to 1,372 units 'Retirement Housing' in 2031.
- 5.7 Figure 5.2 puts these required increases into the local need and demand context predicted for 2031. Compared to the position in 2021, the number of owner-occupied 'older households' increases by 36% to over 9,100. The ratio of owner-occupied 'older households' to specialist housing for older owner occupiers reduces from 19:1 to 5:1.
- 5.8 Whilst the ratio narrows from 19:1 to 4.5:1, the notional 'gap' in supply - the number of 'older households' 'with no choice but to stay put' - increases marginally between 2021 and 2031. In these circumstances, there is a strong case to exceed the 'Housing in Later Life' based requirements for owner occupiers.

Figure 4.2: The Gap Between the Future Potential Demand (2031 population) and Requirement for Specialist Housing for Older Owner Occupiers in 2031



Source: 2021 Census Custom Dataset, ONS 2018-based Population Projections and Stantec analysis



Specialist Housing for Older People in Welwyn Hatfield

5. Conclusions

- 5.9 In conclusion, there is significant scope to increase in the supply of specialist housing for owner occupiers above the requirements arrived at using the 'Housing in Later Life' benchmark provision rates.
- 5.10 In the circumstances, the 'Housing in Later Life' based current (2023) requirement for 315 additional units 'Housing with Care' for owner occupiers and 832 additional units 'Retirement Housing' for owner occupiers, increasing to 398 and 1,081 respectively in 2031, should be regarded as minimum requirements and not a ceiling on development. This is a conclusion that is consistent and commensurate with:
- a. Current national policy, and the national policy direction of travel.⁴⁷
 - b. The local indicators of need summarised in this report.⁴⁸
 - c. Increasing the limited options available to Welwyn Hatfield's older population and furthering the aim of enabling older people to live well and independently longer into their old age.
 - d. Achieving the multitude of proven benefits of living in and increasing the supply of extra care (modern 'Housing with Care') housing.⁴⁹
 - e. Published guidance and provision rates recently endorsed at appeal and for the purpose of plan making.⁵⁰
- 5.11 The minimum requirements reported here should be preferred to the Council's assessment of need and emerging Policy SP7 requirement, because the Council's assessment and policy requirement amount to a suboptimal and inadequate response to points a. to e., listed above.

⁴⁷ Levelling-up and Regeneration Bill: reforms to national planning policy, Chapter 5, paragraphs 5 to 9 and question 23; December 2022, consultation closed 2nd March 2023.

⁴⁸ Section 3 of this Report.

⁴⁹ Section 2, 3 and Appendix 1 of this Report.

⁵⁰ Section 2 and Appendix 2 of this Report.



APPENDICES



A1: National Policy, Guidance and Research

The 2021 National Planning Policy Framework's (NPPF) and supporting Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)

- 1.1 The NPPF's objective is to "**significantly boost the supply of housing**" and as part of this that "*the size, type and tenure of housing needed for different groups in the community should be assessed and reflected in planning policies (including older people)*" (emphasis added, paragraph 62).
- 1.2 The importance of **planning for specialist housing for older people** is emphasised in the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) section on 'Housing for older and disabled people'. Under the heading *Why is it important to plan for the housing needs of older people?* (ID: 63-001) the first point made is that the need to provide such housing is "critical". **The use of the word 'critical' serves to characterise the need to provide housing for older people as 'having the potential to become disastrous, at the point of crisis'**¹. Such language is used nowhere else within PPG and therefore emphasises the importance of the issue.
- 1.3 It then goes on to explain why providing housing for older people is at crisis point. First, because people are living longer lives, second, because society as a whole is ageing, third because of the sheer numbers involved – the number of people aged 85 and over, an age group more likely to need some kind of care and support as well as specially designed housing to live independently, will double by mid-2041.
- 1.4 Having outlined key drivers of need for specialist housing for older people, the same paragraph then explains the benefits of offering a 'better choice' of such housing. First, helping older people to live independently for longer. Second, helping older people feel more connected to their communities (e.g., reducing loneliness and social isolation). Third, reducing health and care costs (because the health and well-being of older people is improved, and the delivery of health and wellbeing services to older people is timelier and more efficient).

"The need to provide housing for older people is critical. People are living longer lives and the proportion of older people in the population is increasing. In mid-2016 there were 1.6 million people aged 85 and over; by mid-2041 this is projected to double to 3.2 million. Offering older people a better choice of accommodation to suit their changing needs can help them live independently for longer, feel more connected to their communities and help reduce costs to the social care and health systems. Therefore, an

¹ Oxford Dictionary of English, third definition of the adjective 'critical'



understanding of how the ageing population affects housing needs is something to be considered from the early stages of plan-making through to decision-taking.” (Emphasis added)

- 1.5 The *type* of housing for older people is also addressed in the PPG. Paragraph ID: 63-004 refers to the evidence sources which can be considered when identifying the housing needs of older people, and states how *“The future need for specialist accommodation for older people broken down by tenure and type (e.g., sheltered housing, **extra care**) may need to be assessed”* (Emphasis added).
- 1.6 In Local Plans, the PPG (ID: 63-006) states how *“authorities should set **clear policies** to address the housing needs of groups with particular needs such as older and disabled people”* (emphasis added) and that these policies should set out *“how the plan-making authority will consider proposals for the **different types of housing** that these groups are likely to require”* (emphasis added). The same paragraph also recommends that authorities could provide *“indicative figures or a range for the units of specialist housing for older people needed across the plan area throughout the plan period.”*
- 1.7 The accessibility of housing is identified under the *‘Should plan-making bodies set minimum requirements for accessible housing?’* (ID: 63:009) which states that where a need exists, planning policies should address this need by determining the number of homes where the M4(1), M4(2), and M4(3) categories of accessibility are required.
- 1.8 PPG (ID: 63-010) moves on to consider *‘What are the different types of specialist housing for older people?’* and lists four types of accommodation (Age-restricted general market housing; Retirement living or sheltered housing; **Extra care housing** or housing-with-care; and Residential care homes and nursing homes) which are included in the type of specialist housing which can be provided. However, the PPG is also clear that this list is not exhaustive.
- 1.9 The description of ‘Extra care housing or housing-with-care’ in PPG is set out below:

“Extra care housing or housing-with-care: This usually consists of purpose-built or adapted flats or bungalows with a medium to high level of care available if required, through an onsite care agency registered through the Care Quality Commission (CQC). Residents are able to live independently with 24-hour access to support services and staff, and meals are also available. There are often extensive communal areas, such as space to socialise or a wellbeing centre. In some cases, these developments are known as retirement communities or villages - the intention is for residents to benefit from varying levels of care as time progresses.”



- 1.10 The PPG (ID: 63-012) is also clear that Local Plans should make provision for older peoples housing, stating *“Plans need to provide for specialist housing for older people **where a need exists**. Innovative and diverse housing models will need to be considered where appropriate.”*
- 1.11 In summary the PPG is extensive and sets out the critical need for older persons accommodation, and the varying types of specialist accommodation which can help to address this need. It makes it abundantly clear to LPAs that there is burden upon them to urgently understand and then address the critical needs of the elderly both in plan making and decision taking.

House of Lords ‘Meeting Housing Demand’ Report (January 2022)

- 1.12 In the context of national planning policy and guidance, it is imperative that local planning authorities plan positively for the ageing population. The recent (January 2022) House of Lords report ‘Meeting housing demand’ has emphasised this, concluding that *“Older people’s housing choices are **constrained** by the options available” (our emphasis)* and that a *“more focussed”* approach to planning for the older population is needed.²
- 1.13 Furthermore, many older people simply do not want to move into stereotypical older persons accommodation. As the House of Lords report highlighted, *“only 5% of over-65s live in specialist housing, while the vast majority of older people live in mainstream housing and **80% wish to remain** in their own homes as they age”* (emphasis added). The House of Lords report goes on to state *“Older people are a **diverse** group with **varying** needs and require a **range** of mainstream housing options, and specialist homes only form a small part of the solution.”*³
- 1.14 The House of Lords report also heard how many older people live in under-occupied properties. Some participants to the hearing sessions which informed the House of Lords report stated how *“a **lack** of retirement housing is one of the **key factors** contributing towards older people staying in large, unsuitable houses for longer instead of downsizing”* and that this *“can cause **stagnation** in the housing market, as it **prevents** younger buyers from trading up to larger houses, which in turn **prevents** first-time buyers from entering the housing market at all and can result in older people needing to spend **more time** in hospitals and care homes as their homes do not **meet their needs**”*⁴ (emphasis added).

² Meeting Housing Demand report; House of Lords (10th Jan 2022), page 41, paragraphs 90-91.

³ Ibid, page 38, paragraph 80.

⁴ Ibid, page 40, paragraph 84.



1.15 The House of Lords report concluded on the issue of ‘Homes for older people’ with the following two recommendations:

- There will need to be a mix of more suitable, accessible ‘mainstream’ housing and specialist housing for the elderly if the housing market is to be sustainable in the coming years as the population ages. Older people’s housing choices are constrained by the options available
- Little progress has been made on housing for the elderly. As demand changes as the population ages, a more focussed approach is needed. The Government must take a coordinated approach to the issue of later living housing, between departments and through the National Planning Policy Framework (emphasis added).⁵

1.16 Following the conclusions of the House of Lords report, the Government published its response on 28 March 2022.

Her Majesty’s Government’s response to the House of Lords Built Environment Committee report on Meeting Housing Demand (28 March 2022)

1.17 In response to paragraph 18 of Chapter one of the House of Lords report which reads, “*The UK has an ageing population: one in four people in the UK will be over 65 by 2050. Changes in age demographics should be reflected in the types of new homes built, particularly as there will be an increase in older people living alone*” the Government have made several comments.

1.18 The Government have commented “*Ensuring older people can live in **suitable homes tailored to their needs** can help them to live **healthier lives** for longer, retain their **independence** and feel more connected to their communities. It can also help to **reduce pressure on health and social care services**”⁶ (emphasis added).*

1.19 To add to this the Government have stated, “*This Government is committed to supporting the growth of a **thriving older peoples’ housing sector**, one that builds enough homes to match growing need, gives certainty to developers and investors, and empowers consumers with choice from a **diverse range of housing options**”⁷ (emphasis added).*

⁵ Meeting Housing Demand report; House of Lords (10th Jan 2022), page 41, paragraphs 90-91.

⁶ Her Majesty’s Government’s response to the House of Lords Built Environment Committee report on Meeting Housing Demand (28 March 2022) a2, page 1.

⁷ Ibid.



Specialist Housing for Older People in Welwyn Hatfield

Appendix 1: National Policy, Guidance and Research

- 1.20 The Government also realise how more needs to be done and state “*we realise that **more needs to be done** to meet the housing needs of our ageing population. That is why we are launching a **new taskforce** on the issue of older people's housing this year, which will look at ways we can provide **better choice, quality and security** of housing for older people across the country*”⁸ (emphasis added).
- 1.21 In response to the House of Lords’ recommendations (see paragraph 2.8), the Government commented as follows.
- 1.22 At the outset they state “*We are committed to further improving the **diversity of housing options** available to older people. **Boosting** a range of specialist housing across the country will be **key** to achieving this*”⁹ (emphasis added).
- 1.23 The House of Lords report emphasises the issues affecting accommodation for the older population **now**, and how the lack of suitable accommodation across the country has a ‘knock-on’ effect on the wider housing market.
- 1.24 In September 2018 the ‘Government response to the Second Report of Session 2017-19 of the Housing, Communities and Local Government Select Committee inquiry into Housing for Older People’ concluded “*The needs of older people now are **different from previous generations** and their aspirations around housing and lifestyles have **changed dramatically***”¹⁰ (emphasis added).
- 1.25 The Government response moved on to state “*In our Housing White Paper ‘Fixing our Broken Housing Market’ we recognised that there is a **fundamental need** to do more to ensure that more homes suitable for older people are being built as part of our overall ambition to increase housing supply*” whilst acknowledging “*We also recognise the need to provide more of the **right types of homes for older people** to help support an ageing population. Offering older people a **better choice** of accommodation can help them to live independently for longer, improve their quality of life and **free up more family homes** for other buyers*”¹¹ (emphasis added).
- 1.26 As the above paragraph emphasises, the provision of the right types and a wide choice of homes for older people can help to free up under-occupied family sized housing. This would be a significant benefit for the wider housing market as many older people remain

⁸ Her Majesty’s Government’s response to the House of Lords Built Environment Committee report on Meeting Housing Demand (28 March 2022), page 2.

⁹ Ibid, page 7.

¹⁰ Government response to the Second Report of Session 2017-19 of the Housing, Communities and Local Government Select Committee inquiry into Housing for Older People (September 2018), page 4.

¹¹ Ibid, pages 21-22.



in the family home long after children have become adults and moved out. This can be for a variety of reasons, one of which is a lack of choice of specialist accommodation in their local area.

People at the Heart of Care: Adult Social Care White Paper' (December 2021, Social Care White Paper)

- 1.27 The recently published '**People at the Heart of Care: Adult Social Care White Paper' (December 2021, Social Care White Paper)** (Ref a3) acknowledges the link between adult social care and appropriate accommodation. The pivotal role of accommodation is set out early in section four (paragraph 4.5) of the White Paper which states "*For older people, having a home that sustains safe, independent living can help **prevent ill-health, reduce the amount of care and support they need, and delay or avoid altogether the need for residential care***" ¹² (emphasis added).
- 1.28 The above paragraph emphasises how the provision of suitable accommodation types for older people can benefit wider society by reducing the reliance on services such as health care. In this context the White Paper states "*A lack of suitable housing options results in too many people staying in hospital **unnecessarily** or moving to residential care **prematurely** even if that is not what they want, instead of recovering at their own home*"¹³ (emphasis added). An increase in accommodation options could assist an over-stretched NHS.
- 1.29 In summary, providing the right types of accommodation for the older population has wider benefits for the housing market and the health sector.

Research that addresses the benefits of extra care housing / housing with care

- 1.30 The health and social benefits of Extra Care Housing have been explored by a number of publications, including '**The health and social care cost-benefits of housing for older people**' published in 2019 which outlines the evidence for the health and social care benefits of Specialist Housing for older people, particularly Extra Care housing. The report concludes there is reasonably strong evidence to suggest significant cost-benefits to the NHS and local authority adult social care.
- 1.31 The benefits/evidence outlined include:
- Reduced visits to a GP;
 - Reduced community nurse visits;

¹² People at the Heart of Care: Adult Social Care Reform White Paper, Department of Health & Social Care (December 2021), page 34, paragraph 4.5.

¹³ Ibid, page 34, paragraph 4.6.



Specialist Housing for Older People in Welwyn Hatfield

Appendix 1: National Policy, Guidance and Research

- Reduced number of ambulance callouts;
- Shorter unplanned hospital stays;
- Reduced frequency of unplanned admissions;
- Less likely to enter long-term care; and
- Improved wellbeing and quality of life.¹⁴

1.32 Overall, the evidence reviewed indicated that one older person living in extra care housing generates health and social care cost-benefits of £2,441 per annum, which does not include other savings that are more difficult to reduce to a per-person figure due to the nature of the evidence.

1.33 Similar benefits are reported in **'The ExtraCare Charitable Trust Research Report'** also published in 2019 which presents primary research findings from the collaborative research project between ExtraCare Charitable Health Trust and Aston Research Centre for Healthy Ageing (ARCHA) at Aston University), collated by Professor Carol Holland at the Centre for Ageing Research (C4AR) at Lancaster University. Covering the period 2012 to 2018, the report finds as follows.

In conclusion, over the 5-year period since moving in, significant improvements can be found in ExtraCare residents' health and well-being. Notably, residents are exercising more and have improved their memory and cognitive abilities. Importantly, in some critical health factors where a downward trend might normally be expected with age, for example in terms of functional abilities, independence or age-related changes in cognitive function, specifically executive function, no such trends are emerging. This is very encouraging. Further, usual age-related changes in frailty status are delayed in ExtraCare residents, which demonstrates that frailty is indeed malleable and that positive changes in physical, cognitive and social health can influence the progression of frailty. Levels of depression are low among residents while social well-being is high, with lower levels of loneliness than national averages. Further, ExtraCare residents have changed the way in which they use health care resources and we note that there is a cost saving to the NHS of just under £2000 per person, over 5 years. This is in contrast to the usual expected increase in NHS costs as people age.¹⁵

1.34 Compelling health and social benefits associated with Extra Care Housing are augmented by the benefits to the housing market of boosting the supply of Specialist Housing for Older People put forward in **'Future Proofing Retirement Living: Easing**

¹⁴ The health and social care cost-benefits of housing for older people (2019), page 2.

¹⁵ The ExtraCare Charitable Trust Research Report (2019), page 30.



the **Care and Housing Crises'** (Ref a6), published in November 2022 by the International Longevity Centre:

- **There is a chronic shortage of retirement accommodation with access to care.**
- **There is increasing under-occupation of the existing housing stock which constricts the supply of family homes and increases house prices.**
- **The potential exists to release thousands of homes each year for younger purchasers by building more retirement accommodation.**
- **To make them attractive, retirement homes need to be in viable communities or clusters in places where people want to live. They also need to be of good quality and to have good access to care and other amenities.**
- **The evidence is that housing with care is good for health and wellbeing, and economies of scale mean that care costs are lower, so there is alignment with health and social care prevention policies.**
- **Larger retirement developments are increasingly becoming the norm. They are able to provide a wider range of facilities and accommodation types, and to offer care.**¹⁶

1.35 Currently, the care and support requirements of older householders are serviced by a combination of family, informal arrangements, domiciliary care at home, or domiciliary care in a Specialist Housing setting. For many people ready to be discharged from hospital, their living arrangements are evidently not considered to be appropriate, because the requisite care is not in place, and or the setting is not appropriate.

1.36 For example, last November it was reported that a chronic lack of social care results in about 12% of hospital beds in the East of England occupied by patients who are fit and ready for discharge, causing their health to worsen¹⁷. On average, 13,600 beds across NHS England are occupied every day with patients who doctors say are medically fit to go home or to a Care Home.

1.37 The strain on the health and social care system does not end with patients being discharged from hospital. A recent survey (November 2022)¹⁸ reports that the number of people waiting for an assessment of their care or support needs has increased by 20% since November 2021, from 204,241 to 245,821 people in August 2022.

¹⁶ The Mayhew Review; Future Proofing Retirement Living – Easing the Care and Housing Crisis (November 2022), page 47.

¹⁷ Article from the Guardian: Up to one in three English hospital beds occupied by patients fit for discharge (Nov 2022): <https://www.theguardian.com/society/2022/nov/13/hospital-beds-england-occupied-patients-fit-discharge>

¹⁸ The Association of Directors of Adults Social Services, Autumn Survey Report (November 2022), Pages 4-5, 15-16, 17-18.



- 1.38 Of those people waiting for an assessment of any kind, 80,967 or 33% of people have been waiting for six months or more, an increase of 9.7% since 30 April 2022 and nearly double (97%) the figure reported in November 2021.
- 1.39 The value of Extra Care housing and its key role in helping to shape the future of adult social care is expressed by the Association of Directors of Adults Social Services as follows:

Statement Five: Housing is central to care and to our lives.

Every decision about care is also a decision about housing. People should be supported to live at home and remain in their communities unless their needs can only be met elsewhere. We must support working age disabled people, rough sleepers, homeless people and others to establish and keep their own homes. We must build more care and support around people's homes, expanding and evolving housing-based care and support such as Extra Care housing.

Reform must be underpinned by the 'Home First' principle. This is likely to mean a much stronger emphasis on some existing types of care and support which are housing based, such as 'supported living' and 'extra care housing', as well as new and innovative forms of care.

In turn, this may mean a shift away from existing types of residential care, for example, a lesser reliance on long stay, larger scale care homes although they may continue to play a key role in reablement and short-term care.

Currently, too many people are trapped in unsuitable accommodation – developing a wider and more appropriate stock of housing will ensure people can stay in the places they love for as long as possible, and free up larger housing stock for others who need it.

Home and care are intertwined and the future must be about creating a diversity of provision which supports working age disabled people and older people to live as independently as possible to be supported to live in their own homes, with the care and support they need, for as long as possible.

To achieve this aim we expect to see a significant national expansion in extra care housing through dedicated funding, with local authorities given an expectation of a significant multi-year programme. We should review current housing rights for people in care settings to strengthen the right to live at home, to remain at home following a change of care needs, and to be discharged home after a spell in hospital. We should fund and develop specific housing support programmes to enable radical improvements to the current NHS Plans for Transforming Care, Mental Health crises support, and tackling



homelessness and rough sleeping. Housing is a key determinant for better care, and equality.¹⁹

¹⁹ The Association of Directors of Adults Social Services, ADULT SOCIAL CARE – SHAPING A BETTER FUTURE; Nine Statements to Help Shape Adult Social Care Reform (July 2020), pages 9 and 10.



A2: Pertinent Appeal Decisions and EiP Proceedings

- 2.1 The Housing in Later Life provision rates have repeatedly been endorsed by the Planning Inspectorate through the Local Plan process and in Section 78 planning appeals. The recent (29 November 2021) publication of Mid Sussex District Council's Site Allocations Development Plan Main Modifications. Main Modification 3 provides a *'New policy to address the need for specialist accommodation for older people and care homes'*.²⁰ MM3 states that:

The modification takes account of the recent appeal decision in relation to a proposal for an Extra Care development of up to 84 units of Use Class C2 at Albourne. This appeal decision underlines the importance of providing for older persons' housing, both in paragraph 61 of the Framework, and also in the Planning Practice Guidance, which stresses that the need to provide housing for older people is critical in view of the rising numbers in the overall population.

- 2.2 The Inspector at the appeal decision referenced above, allowing an appeal for an Extra Care development of 84 units, reached the following conclusion²¹:

The Appellants have used a tenure split of 33% rent and 67% purchase in their modelling. Whilst this is recognised as favouring an owner-occupied solution it nonetheless reflects the local housing market in Mid Sussex. Furthermore, it aligns with national policy insofar as it redresses the balance towards greater flexibility and choice in how older people are able to live.

- 2.3 Of further note, is the Inspector's explicit rejection of Mid Sussex Council's approach to tenure²²:

I consider that the Appellants' assessment of demand in terms of tenure is more credible and thus to be preferred.

- 2.4 Acknowledging the prevalence of owner occupation locally, the result is a policy for Mid Sussex which sets out the identified need for leasehold extra care units, based on the Housing in Later Life extra care provision rates, as follows²³:

There is an identified need for specialist accommodation for older people comprising at least 665 additional extra care

²⁰ Mid Sussex District Council's Site Allocations Development Plan Main Modifications (November 2021), MM3, page 2.

²¹ Site of the former Hazeldens Nursery, London Road, Albourne, West Sussex BN6 9BL (APP/D3830/W/19/3241644), paragraph 89.

²² Ibid, paragraph 90.

²³ Mid Sussex District Council's Site Allocations Development Plan (June 2022), page 105, policy SA39.



units (Use Class C2) by 2030, of which at least 570 should be leasehold.

- 2.5 The Mid Sussex Site Allocations DPD was subsequently adopted on 29 June 2022.
- 2.6 Further endorsement of the Housing in Later Life provision rates is given by the Sonning Common Appeal Inspector, Mr Harold Stephens, in his Decision dated 25 June 2021. The Inspector concluded as follows in respect of the provision rates used by the appellant's expert witness²⁴:

Mr Appleton sets out a provision rate for private extra care of 30 per 1,000 of the 75 and over population in the District based on a total provision of 45 extra care units per 1,000 (4.5%) across both the affordable and private sectors, but split on a ratio of one third for social rented and two thirds for sale. This takes into consideration the research in "More Choice: Greater Voice" and revisions in "Housing in Later Life". I note that the 45 units per 1,000 is to be divided as suggested in order to bring supply into closer alignment with tenure choice among older people. That is 450 units now. Projecting forward, an indicative provision of 633 units of market extra care would be required by 2035. The Council refers to the Oxfordshire's Market Position Statement which assumes a lower need figure for extra care housing but the focus there appears to be on social rented extra care housing. The Council also suggests that the SHMA evidence is to be preferred. However, I note that it does not identify figures for extra care, nor does it relate to the present PPG. In my view, Mr Appleton's provision rate is preferred and the need for more private extra care is overwhelming.

- 2.7 Moreover, Mr Stephens adds that he does not consider the Housing in Later Life provision rates to be especially ambitious and concludes that they should probably be higher²⁵.

In my view, there is a strong case that Mr Appleton's 45 per 1,000 overall, with 30 per 1,000 to market extra care, should be far more ambitious given not only the true tenure split in the District but also what it could mean for the ability to contribute towards addressing the housing crisis. Mrs Smith [for the Council] conceded that the figure of 30 per 1,000 was hardly ambitious and, if anything, was underplaying the scale of the potential need.

- 2.8 Mr Stephens addresses the Council's approach to assessing need as follows²⁶:

²⁴ Little Sparrows, Sonning Common, Oxfordshire RG4 9NY (APP/Q3115/W/20/3265861), paragraph 38.

²⁵ Ibid, paragraph 40.

²⁶ Ibid, paragraph 44.



Specialist Housing for Older People in Welwyn Hatfield
Appendix 2: Pertinent Appeal Decisions and EiP Proceedings

The Council sought to undermine the Appellant's need case with reference to earlier data from Housing LIN and the @SHOP tool. This on-line tool is highlighted in the PPG as a basis for calculating need. But the fact is it only provides a figure based on existing prevalence and then seeks to project that forward with a proportion increase based on the increase in the 75+ age group in the District. This is not a measure of need.

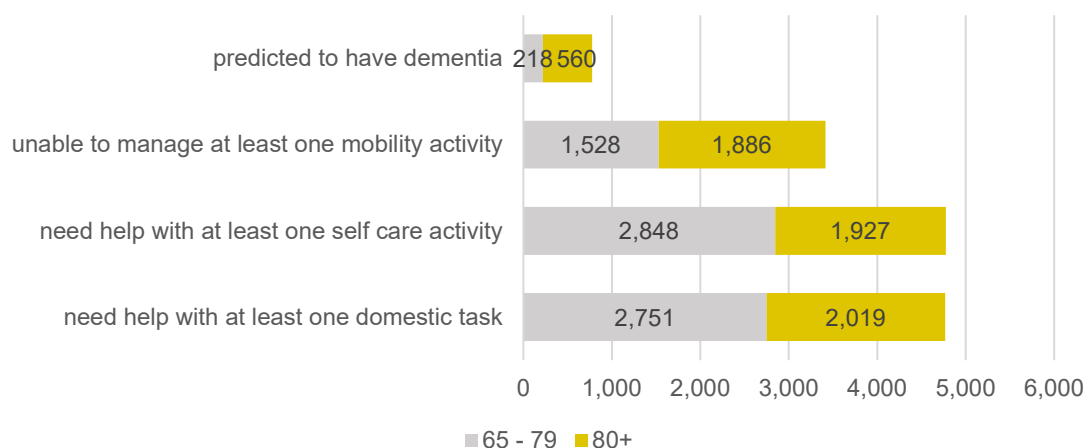
- 2.10 Mr Stephens is making the point that an approach that maintains the ratio between current provision and the current population aged 75 and over is not an assessment of need for specialist housing for older people.



A3: Further Indicators of Need

3.1 Figures A3.1 and A3.2 presents estimates of the number of Welwyn Hatfield residents, aged 65 and over, whose ability to live independently is likely to be compromised by a range of health and functional limitations in 2021 and predicted for 2031 respectively.

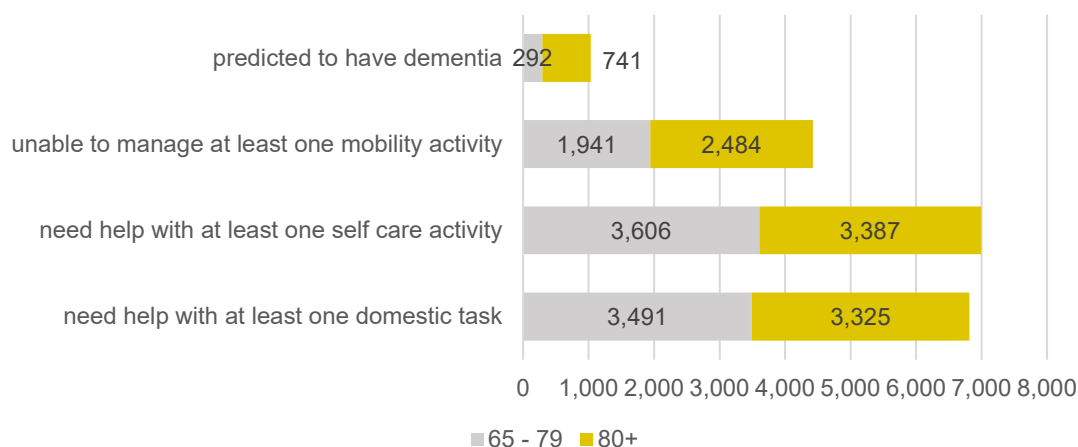
Figure A3.1: Indicators of need amongst the population aged 65 and over, 2021 estimate



Source: POPPI

3.2 Figure A3.1 shows that there are approximately 778 Welwyn Hatfield residents aged 65 and over who are currently predicted to have dementia, 72% of whom are aged 80 and over. Figure A3.2 shows the number of people aged 80 and over and predicted to have dementia is projected to increase by 32% (c. 181 people) by 2031, compared to an increase of 34% (c. 74 people) in the 65 to 79 age group. In total, the number of residents ages 65 and over and predicted to have dementia are projected to increase by 255 people (+33%) from 2021 to 2031.

Figure A3.2: Indicators of need amongst the population aged 65 and over, 2031 prediction.



Source: POPPI, Stantec Analysis

- 3.3 The ability to manage mobility activities fundamental to living independently includes activities such as getting to the toilet, getting in and out of bed and moving around the house. Figure A3.1 shows that the number of people aged 65 and over who are unable to manage at least one mobility activity independently is currently 3,414, 55% of whom are age 80 and over.
- 3.4 The number of Welwyn Hatfield’s residents aged 80 and over and unable to independently manage at least one mobility task on their own is projected to rise by 32% (c. 597 people) by 2031. Amongst the 65 to 79 age group, the corresponding increase is 27% (c. 413 people).
- 3.5 Overall, the total number of people aged 65 and over who are unable to perform at least one mobility task independently is projected to rise by 30% (c. 1,010 people) from 2021 to 2031. Figures A3.1 and A3.2 also show the number of Welwyn Hatfield residents that need help with one domestic task. The number aged 80 and over who fall into this category is projected to rise by 65% (c. 1,307 people) from 2021 to 2031, and the number aged 65 to 79 in this category by 27% (c. 740).
- 3.6 Domestic tasks are comprised of activities of daily living such as paying bills, getting out of the house, food shopping and domestic chores. While these activities are not fundamental for living, they are important indicators of a person’s ability to achieve a good quality of life independently.
- 3.7 Self-care tasks are fundamental to independent living. They include activities such as washing oneself, getting in and out of bed, moving around inside including up and down stairs, eating and taking medicine. Those who require assistance to complete self-care



Specialist Housing for Older People in Welwyn Hatfield

Appendix 3: Further Indicators of Need

tasks are unlikely to have the ability to live independently, without the necessary support on hand and in the absence of specially designed housing and living environment.

- 3.8 There are currently 4,775 Welwyn Hatfield residents who struggle with at least one self-care task, as shown in Figure A3.1. This is projected to increase by 43% to 6,993 by 2031, comprised of 76% increase (c.1,460 people) in the population aged 80 and over and a 27% increase (758 people) in the population aged 65 to 79.



A4: Local Planning Policy Evidence Base

4.1 The evidence that informed SP7 specialist accommodation for older people targets is comprised of two key documents, part of a series of housing need assessments and updates published between 2015 and 2022.

i) Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council Strategic Housing Market Assessment Update 2017

4.2 The first document, Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council Strategic Housing Market Assessment Update 2017 (SHMA Update 2017), assessed specialist housing need based on growth the population aged 75 and over between 2013 and 2032, as published in the 2014-based population projections published by ONS.²⁷

4.3 To estimate demand, SHMA Update 2017 applied specialist housing target / benchmark provision rates, by type of specialist housing, to the growth in population aged 75 and over. The rates were sourced from Housing Learning and Improvement Network's (Housing LIN) Strategic Housing for Older People Analysis Tool (called SHOP@)²⁸, which was freely available at the time SHMA Update 2017 was prepared, but which has since become a paid for consultancy service.²⁹

4.4 There are two shortcomings with the approach taken by SHMA Update, 2017. First, no regard is given to whether the supply of specialists housing is sufficient to meet current need. In this case, the application of a target provision rate to the population in 2013 would provide an indication of any current shortfall or surplus in supply, that could be added to the published estimate which reflects change in demand over time.

4.5 Second, the provision rate is relatively low (aggregate 45 units per 1,000 population aged 75 and over) and it does not provide a tenure split. In light of local tenure preference, indicators of need and the proven benefits of 'housing with care' and the national planning guidance perspective of critical need, the 'Housing in Later Life' approach and provision rates should be preferred (the rationale and local evidence presented in Sections 2 and 3 of this report).

²⁷ Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council Strategic Housing Market Assessment Update 2017, page 71, Table 5.5

²⁸ Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council Strategic Housing Market Assessment Update 2017, page 71, paragraph 5.32

²⁹ <https://www.housinglin.org.uk/Topics/browse/HousingExtraCare/ExtraCareStrategy/SHOP/SHOPAT/Projecting-future-Need/>



ii) Examination Document (EX) 203A

- 4.6 SHMA 2017 Update assessed net additional demand for 533 units sheltered, 85 units enhanced sheltered and 107 units extra care; 725 units in total. Using the same methodology but substituting the 2014-based population projections with the 2018-based population projections, Examination Document (EX) 203A, dated August 2020, revised the SHMA 2017 Update assessment downward. The shortcomings outlined above remain. The revised assessed net additional demand is for 456 units sheltered, 73 units enhanced sheltered and 91 units extra care, 621 units in total, 2016 to 2036³⁰.
- 4.7 EX203A also revised the assessment of need for Care Home and Nursing Home (use class C2) bedspaces, to 201 over the period 2016 to 2036, down from 339, 2013 to 2032 as published in SHMA Update 2017. The EX203A assessments are picked up by and reflected in the main modifications to emerging Policy SP7, discussed above.

iii) Welwyn Hatfield Older Persons Housing Strategy

- 4.8 The Welwyn Hatfield Older Persons Housing Strategy identifies key issues surrounding the delivery of housing for older people and sets out the Council's corporate priorities for addressing them³¹. The Strategy is an online undated resource only that appear to have developed concurrently with the submission version of the emerging Local Plan.
- 4.9 The reasons given for introducing the strategy are as follows:

'We have an increasing generation of older people, who are living longer, healthier, and more active lives with higher and evolving aspirations for their housing in later life.

Research suggests that good quality housing, secured at the right time, that meets the changing needs of people as they age, significantly preserves the health and wellbeing of older people; in turn making significant savings in expenditure on long term health care & support.

Providing housing that older people want to move to, could have a significant impact on the general housing market, helping to alleviate the country's housing crisis, freeing up equity and much needed family size homes across all sectors.'³²

- 4.10 The three key aims of the Strategy are:

³⁰ EX203A The implications of the 2018-based SNPP and SNHP on the Welwyn Hatfield OAN, August 2020, Appendix 4. Table 4.2

³¹ <https://www.welhat.gov.uk/plans-strategies/older-persons-housing-strategy>

³² <https://www.welhat.gov.uk/plans-strategies/older-persons-housing-strategy/3>



Aim 1: Have a range of good quality, appropriate and affordable housing available across all tenures to meet changing needs.

Aim 2: Enable Older People to live independently for as long as possible.

Aim 3: Encourage partnership working between all stakeholders to improve the overall quality of life experienced by older people.³³

4.11 The Strategy reports a number of key challenges, identified through consultation with older residents, including:

'Providing a better and wider choice of housing options for older people in the borough that they want to live in and can afford. New developments are needed informed by the results of this consultation, and existing stock needs to be improved.

Identifying and removing the barriers that are preventing older people from choosing to "right size" at the right time. People who live in good quality accommodation, that meets their changing needs are healthier and happier anything that prevents people achieving these needs to be addressed. Emotional ties we cannot do anything about, but providing practical help with packing, moving etc. could be a consideration.

Work to remove social isolation of older people in the provision and design of their future housing. Loneliness and isolation amongst older people has been a focus of media attention recently and the negative impact on health and wellbeing are becoming widely known, the consultation highlighted that it is an important factor for future housing for older people in this borough.³⁴

³³ <https://www.welhat.gov.uk/plans-strategies/older-persons-housing-strategy/5>

³⁴ <https://www.welhat.gov.uk/plans-strategies/older-persons-housing-strategy/12>

