

Continuing care retirement communities: A guide to planning

2008 update by
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Continuing care retirement communities: A guide to planning by Robin Tetlow was published by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation (JRF) in April 2006. An update was published in October 2007 focusing on the Secretary of State decision concerning Storthes Hall, Huddersfield, issued in January 2007.

This further update summarises all the relevant changes in policy and practice which have occurred since the original publication. It should be read alongside the original report, the October 2007 update and the associated technical appendices, all of which can be downloaded from the JRF website (www.jrf.org.uk).

Recent policy developments

Section five of the original report focused on a range of policy and good practice documents issued by the Government. The following additional publications are now relevant:

- *PPS3: Housing* (November 2006)
- *Homes for the Future: More Affordable, More Sustainable – Housing Green Paper* (July 2007)
- *Lifetime Homes, Lifetime Neighbourhoods: A National Strategy for Housing in an Ageing Society* (February 2008)
- *Sustainable Planning for Housing in an Ageing Population: A guide for regional-level strategies* (February 2008).

All these documents point to local planning authorities paying more regard to demographic trends and the housing requirements of older people and to providing greater choice, mirroring an increasingly diverse older population.

The foreword to *Sustainable planning for housing in an ageing population*, written by Baroness Andrews, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State at the Department for Communities and Local Government,

states that *'the purpose ... is to place social sustainability at the heart of sustainable planning'* and recognises the importance of cross-sectoral partnerships in order to integrate *'planning for housing, health, social care and community'*.

PPS3 requires regional spatial strategies and local development frameworks to have particular regard to *'the accommodation of requirements of specific groups, in particular, families with children, older and disabled people'* (paragraph 21). This is also identified as one of the key factors to which local planning authorities must have regard in deciding planning applications (paragraph 69).

CCRCs as a concept

The original report highlighted examples of several continuing care retirement communities (CCRCs) across Britain. In the Storthes Hall decision, the Secretary of State concurred with the Inspector that *'the concept of a continuing care retirement community appears sustainable in the longer term, based on examples elsewhere in Britain'* (paragraph 13). This was the first Secretary of State decision to make such an observation.

Over the past two years there has been a marked increase in interest from landowners, developers and care operators with a wide diversity of schemes emerging in all parts of the country.

Use Class Order classification

Practice continues to vary regarding the Use Class designation of CCRCs (C2, C3 or sui generis), especially because of the differing character, size and balance of facilities provided on different schemes and the complications of defining an overall *planning unit*.

