

Housing with care

Housing with care allows you to live on your own but with care provided when you need it.

There are various housing with care schemes, including retirement housing, extra care housing and supported living for younger adults.

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What is housing with care?

Housing with care is a concept which combines independent living, a home with security of tenure, along with care services arranged according to need. They are varied and diverse, but most people are familiar with the traditional model of sheltered housing. Housing with care incorporates sheltered housing along with modern developments to cater to the needs and individual wishes of people. Schemes may be run by housing associations, the local authority, voluntary organisations or private companies. Properties may be available for rent, mixed tenure or to purchase.

Due to its nature there are no real definitions of housing with care schemes however terms you may come across include sheltered housing, very sheltered housing, retirement villages, assisted living, extra care or close care. The two most popular forms of housing with care are discussed below.

Sheltered housing

Sheltered (or retirement) housing is provided by local authority housing departments and housing associations for people who would like to remain independent but prefer the added security and reassurance of a scheme manager and an alarm call service.

A scheme manager is either based at the site or visits regularly. Many sheltered housing schemes also have communal lounges, laundry facilities, lifts, door entry systems and specially adapted facilities.

Contact your local council for further advice on schemes local to your area.

Extra Care housing

Extra Care housing is similar to sheltered schemes, with self-contained accommodation together with some communal facilities. In an Extra Care scheme, instead of low-level support traditionally provided by wardens in sheltered schemes, higher levels of care and support are provided on site by a designated team of care workers, who can be available 24-hours a day.

Supported living

Supported living is a term generally used to describe situations in which people (often younger adults with specialist needs such as a learning disability or mental health condition) usually rent their home, and their personal care or support is arranged separately. This means they can change their support without having to move or move and take the same support with them.

People have security of tenure and can claim a wide range of welfare benefits.

Supported living can be delivered in a range of settings, including individual flats or houses, clusters of self-contained flats on the same site, shared accommodation, and extra care housing.

The individual, a private landlord, a housing association, a local authority or a charity may own the property.

Supported living refers to the way in which accommodation and support are organised, rather than the amount of support. This will be tailored to individual need and can include access to support 24 hours a day if assessed as necessary. Many people do not require intensive support – particularly with the use of assistive technology such as telecare that ensures an emergency response and helps keep people safe.

