



What you need to know: Independent Review of Adult Social Care in Scotland

Background

The Scottish Government published the findings from an [Independent Review of Adult Social Care in Scotland](#) on 3 February 2021. The intention of the Review, led by former Scottish Government Director General for Health and Social Care and Chief Executive of NHS Scotland Derek Feeley, is to recommend improvements to adult social care in Scotland, primarily in terms of the outcomes achieved by and with people who use services.

This 'what you need to know' briefing provides an overview of some of the main findings of the Review and how these relate to housing. The Scottish Government has not formally responded to the recommendations yet so it is not clear how they will be implemented.

Review recommendations

Having consulted with those with lived experience of social care support, unpaid carers and staff working in the sector, the Review recommends **three key things** which need to change in order to secure better social care outcomes in Scotland. These are to:

1. **shift the paradigm** from the current model to one underpinned by a human rights based approach;
2. **strengthen the foundations** through the implementation of self-directed support and the Independent Living Fund, and the integration of health and social care; and
3. **redesign the system** to include the creation of a new National Care Service which would move social care accountability from local authorities to Scottish Ministers.

The Review also suggests the following vision and ambition for social care:

"Everyone in Scotland will get the social care support they need to live their lives as they choose and to be active citizens. We will all work together to promote and ensure human rights, wellbeing, independent living and equity."

A human rights approach

In order to achieve this vision, the Review recommends that **human rights, equity and equality** must be placed at the heart of social care and be mainstreamed and embedded, possibly enabled by the incorporation of human rights conventions.

The Review states that delivering a **rights based system in practice** must become consistent, intentional and evident in the everyday experience of everyone using social care support, unpaid carers and families, and people working in the sector. People must also be able to access support at the point they feel they need it, including for advice and signposting to local community-based resources and help.

Informal, **community based services** and support should also be encouraged, supported and funded to respond appropriately to the needs of local citizens, including for preventative and low level support.

Models of care and the role of housing

The Review also recommends that future models of social care should be carefully considered to ensure that people are able to **remain in their own homes and communities** for as long as possible, allowing them to maintain and develop social connections and to exercise as much autonomy as possible in decisions about their lives.

The role of **technology** in helping to support improvements in social care is also highlighted by the Review. Experience during the Covid-19



pandemic has shown that this can significantly help people to live more independently and reduce loneliness and isolation. Many housing providers across Scotland are already using various innovative technological aids and adaptations to improve the lives of tenants in their homes and this is an area where the housing sector can continue to provide a valuable contribution.

There is also an acknowledgement that national and local services need to work together better, with **more joint working** between social care and other services such as transport, housing, education and employment.

Creating a National Care Service

The National Care Service, in close co-operation with the National Health Service, should also establish a simplified set of outcomes to measure progress in health and social care support, through which to oversee delivery of social care in local systems via reformed Integration Joint Boards and national care bodies.

At the heart of the Review is the establishment of a new **National Care Service** which should oversee care provision at a national level and lead on social care improvements with a focus on workforce development and programmes to raise standards of care. This would move accountability for social care support to a national body, away from local government.

Finance

The review sets out its recommendation that social care is prioritised as a pillar of preventative spending in Scotland which includes removing charging for non-residential social care support; increase the sums paid for Free Personal and Nursing Care for self-funders using care homes re-open the Independent Living Fund, with the threshold sum for entry to the new scheme reviewed and adjusted.

The CIH view

We welcome this Independent Review into adult social care in Scotland and are pleased to see an acknowledgement of the need for more joined up working between social care and other key services such as housing to help drive improvements. Housing needs to be seen as a key partner in supporting people to live well, and this should be backed by a vision to provide homes that are accessible, adaptable and meet a variety of needs.

While the principles set out in the Review are commendable, there is no clear path to achieving them, nor the funding required to deliver a national care service. The housing sector must continue to be involved in discussions to develop solutions with health and social care partners and our tenants and communities.