

Written evidence submitted by The Almshouse Association (HSC0014)

AA Response to Health and Social Care Committee on NHS White Paper

The Almshouse Association oversees over 1,600 almshouse charities throughout the United Kingdom who provide homes for 36,000 people in housing need. Each one of these charities is providing a vital service to their communities by helping to support residents of all ages to enjoy warm friendly, locally led affordable housing. Almshouses are all charities established by benefactors and have provided this service for over 1,000 years. We are submitting this evidence due to the connection between good quality, affordable housing and savings for the health and social care sector.

We feel that the report, although with good intentions, misses the value of housing as part of the social care discussion. We know that poor health outcomes do not necessarily stem from the NHS itself, but from environmental factors such as deprivation and poor housing. To “improve health and social care for all” we must tackle these core issues and place housing at the heart of the solution.

Almshouses in particular can help in a number of ways by providing genuinely affordable housing which removes financial strain and stress; community living which tackles loneliness and its associated impact; and high quality accommodation which means there are less concerns over draughts, mould and damp. By effectively tackling these issues we can improve the health outcomes across the community. The [Whiteley Village](#) report, published in 2017, linked community living within an almshouses to an increase in longevity, with residents living on average an extra 5 years. We are currently awaiting the results of a more in-depth examination of this trend and would be happy to discuss this with the Committee once published.

By placing a greater emphasis on housing within the health and social care plan we can provide greater savings, and ease the pressure on the sector.

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