

Healthy Homes in the East of England – Press Release (Final)

New report unveils five key principles for Integrated Care Systems to deliver Healthy Homes across East of England

A new report published by the East of England Local Government Association (EELGA), in partnership with Public Health East of England, the East of England All Party Parliamentary Group and IMPOWER Consulting, has outlined five key recommendations for strengthening the integration of health and housing across Integrated Care Systems (ICSs).

The strategic *Healthy Homes* report aims to help ICS leaders in the region enhance collaboration between housing and health sectors to improve overall community health outcomes.

The report, designed as a self-improvement tool for ICSs, highlights the crucial link between housing and health, urging ICS leaders to take practical steps towards addressing health inequalities.

By aligning housing strategies with public health initiatives, the report advocates for a more preventative approach that moves the focus from treatment to addressing the root causes of poor health. Improving housing conditions, the report highlights, is an effective and cost-efficient way to create healthier communities across the East of England.

Cllr Jacqui Taylor, Portfolio Holder for Housing and Inclusion at St Albans District Council and Lead Member for Housing at EELGA, commented: “A safe, warm, affordable and stable home is fundamental to achieving better health outcomes and this report demonstrates that by integrating housing strategies with public health efforts, we can reduce inequalities and build healthier, more resilient communities.

“The consequences arising from the growing pressures facing health and housing services are now greater than ever and the shared commitment of local councils, housing agencies and health organisations in the East of England is a significant step towards driving systemic change.”

The report outlines five guiding principles for ICSs to implement as part of their strategies for improving health and housing outcomes. These principles focus on establishing a shared story and understanding of the health and housing challenges, aligning strategies across sectors, engaging

diverse partners, agreeing roles and accountabilities, and ensuring that strategic goals translate into practical actions on the frontline at community level.

ICSs are encouraged to use the report as a roadmap for aligning their housing and public health strategies to improve outcomes for vulnerable populations, particularly in areas with high levels of deprivation.

Data within the report highlights how local councils and housing providers play a key role in reducing health inequalities by addressing factors such as housing quality, affordability and access to vital services.

Healthy life expectancy in the East of England is higher than the national average for England, with men living 64.6 years and women 65.0 years in good health, compared to England's averages of 63.5 years for both genders. However, there are notable disparities within the region. For example, Luton falls 5.2 years below the East of England average for life expectancy, while Central Bedfordshire exceeds it by 2.3 years.

In addition, the region has a higher-than-average dependency ratio, with a larger proportion of the population aged 0-14 and over 65 compared to those aged 15-64. As the population ages and more people live longer with complex health and care needs, demand for supported housing and related services is increasing. This ageing demographic poses significant housing challenges, particularly relevant to the East of England.

Prof. Aliko Ahmed, Regional Director of Public Health for the East of England, commented:

“Housing is one of the most important social determinants of health. The quality and nature of housing can have a big impact on people’s health. The integration of health and housing is therefore essential to our collective endeavour towards healthier communities.

“This report offers ICSs an actionable framework to ensure that both sectors are working together to improve the health and wellbeing of communities, particularly those facing the greatest challenges.”

The report also calls for ICSs to support the delivery of the NHS Core20plus5 programme, ensuring that health and housing interventions are aligned to address health inequalities.

Additionally, it encourages ICSs to identify housing development sites that align with the principles of collaborative place-making, which will improve community health outcomes by ensuring that new developments meet the needs of local populations.

Sarah Davis, Senior Policy and Practice Officer, Chartered Institute of Housing (CIH),

commented: “At CIH we are committed to ensuring that housing professionals can maximise the role they have in effective health and housing strategies to support the wellbeing of tenants and residents. It is really encouraging to see that health and local government partners are also keen to develop this work with this publication.

“The guiding principles and collaborative tools in this report will enable more examples of integrated working, focused around people, communities and systems.”

Emma Palmer, Chair of BuildEast and Chief Executive of Eastlight Community Homes,

commented: “Health and housing providers, alongside local government, must work together if we are to improve the health and wellbeing of our residents and communities.

“The *Healthy Homes* report, led by the East of England Local Government Association (EELGA), is a positive step forward to aligning sector strategies and supporting Integrated Care Systems in our shared mission to improve public health.

“As Chair of BuildEast and Chief Executive of Eastlight Community Homes, I look forward to further collaborating with EELGA, our partners and peers. Together, we can take a local approach to reduce health inequalities and deliver better outcomes for people across our region.”

Sean Hanson, CEO of IMPOWER, commented: “Housing and health must be viewed as interconnected. By focusing on preventative interventions, ICSs can improve health outcomes and reduce long-term healthcare costs, while building sustainable, inclusive communities. We are very proud to have worked with partners on this important research and report.”

For more information and to download the full report, visit:

www.eelga.gov.uk/app/uploads/2024/11/2451-Healthy-Homes-Report-25112024-V14-DIGITAL.pdf

ENDS

See photos and Notes To Editors below



Caption: Cllr Jacqui Taylor, Portfolio Holder for Housing and Inclusion at St Albans District Council and Lead Member for Housing at the East of England Local Government Association



Caption: Prof. Aliko Ahmed, Regional Director of Public Health for the East of England



Caption: Emma Palmer, Chair of BuildEast and Chief Executive of Eastlight Community Homes



Caption: Sarah Davis, Senior Policy and Practice Officer, Chartered Institute of Housing



Caption: Sean Hanson, CEO of IMPOWER

Notes To Editors

Media Contacts

- Will Greenwood, PLMR Genesis, will.greenwood@genesispr.co.uk, 01473 326 436
- Matt Stott, PLMR Genesis, matthew.stott@genesispr.co.uk, 01473 326 433
- Tim Miller, PLMR Genesis, tim.miller@genesispr.co.uk, 01473 326 405

About East of England Local Government Association (EELGA)

The East of England Local Government Association (EELGA) is the cross-party, membership body of the 50 local authorities across the East of England.

About Chartered Institute of Housing (CIH)

The Chartered Institute of Housing (CIH) is the professional body for people who work in housing, the independent voice for housing, and the home of professional standards. CIH has a diverse membership of people who work in both the public and private sector housing, in 20 countries on five continents across the world. The organisation's goal is to support housing professionals to create a future in which everyone has a place to call home by providing housing professionals and their organisations with the advice, support, and knowledge they need.

CIH is a registered charity and not-for-profit organisation with any profit made put back into the organisation to fund the activities carried out to support the housing sector.

Further information can be found at www.cihorg, and on Twitter [@CIHhousing](https://twitter.com/CIHhousing)

About Eastlight Community Homes Limited

Eastlight Community Homes Limited is a resident-led housing association for the East of England. Together, we create affordable homes and great neighbourhoods that people are proud to live in. Visit www.eastlighthomes.co.uk for more information.

About BuildEast

BuildEast provides homes that are fit for the future in the East. Together, we meet the needs and ambitions of the people and communities in our region and combine our individual strengths to make a bigger difference.

About IMPOWER

IMPOWER is different. IMPOWER has a deep understanding of the complexity of public services and how to deliver change, recognising that a different kind of challenge needs a different type of approach. IMPOWER doesn't just assume innovation can be shoehorned into the public sector. Instead, borne from this understanding, and over two decades serving the public sector, it developed EDGEWORK®. This unique transformational approach enables organisations to make the required mindset shift – towards a focus on outcomes and working across organisational and system boundaries – and provides the tools that make this easier.

IMPOWER believes passionately that change can only be effective and sustained if impact is delivered through co-production. There is a better way. Better outcomes cost less.

IMPOWER operates in the following areas: Health and Social Care, Housing, Homelessness, Place Development, Whole Council Transformation, High Needs and SEND.

Visit <https://www.impower.co.uk>