



Department for
Communities and
Local Government

Stephen Ladyman PhD
Retirement Housing Group
Manzano
St Mary's Lane
Pilton
Somerset
BA4 4BD

Nick Boles MP
Parliamentary Under Secretary of State (Planning)

Department for Communities and Local
Government
Eland House
Bressenden Place
London SW1E 5DU

Tel: [REDACTED]
Fax: [REDACTED]
E-Mail: [REDACTED]

www.communities.gov.uk

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See Stephen

Many thanks to you and your colleagues for meeting with me on Tuesday 9 May to discuss suggestions for increasing the quality and provision of housing for older people, and for your letter dated 14 May. I found our discussion very informative.

Local planning authorities are required to make provision for all household types, including older people. I strongly support this policy objective and consider that imaginative housing schemes for older people, as well as saving money for the NHS, can make it more attractive for older people to move out of their family homes, thereby helping to meet the needs of young families.

We have strengthened the revised Community Infrastructure Levy guidance. The revised guidance published in December 2012 is clear that "charging schedules should not impact disproportionately on particular sectors or specialist forms of development and charging authorities should consider views of developers at an early stage." (page 11, paragraph 37). The guidance does not specify that any form of housing should be treated any differently to other sectors but is clear that if you have evidence that your development would be made unviable by the proposed levy charge, this should be considered by the authority and by the examiner. The guidance supports early engagement in the Levy rate setting process and I would encourage you to work with local authorities consulting on Levy rates to ensure any viability issues are shared. I understand you have a meeting with my officials to discuss the Levy on 12 June.

Since receiving your letter I have received a number of suggestions from the RHG Secretariat for extra-care facilities which might be suitable for a visit. I would welcome such a visit jointly with the health minister and will be in touch with you shortly about finding a convenient date.

It was a pleasure meeting you and getting the opportunity to discuss such an important and pressing matter. It is great to see such commitment in seeking to ensure that the interests of older people are looked after.

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NICK BOLES MP

