

14 September 2020

L&G donates £5m to Newcastle to pioneer new post-COVID approach to elderly care

Legal & General and Newcastle City Council today announce a new £5m charitable partnership to enhance elderly care in the city, placing Newcastle at the forefront of development of ground-breaking changes to the way we care for older people.

Legal & General's £5m gift to the city will be used in two distinct projects. Initially and with immediate effect, it will help fund additional independent living facilities for older residents within the Future Homes Alliance project at Newcastle Helix, managed by the City Council's housing partner, Karbon Homes.

The facilities will be made up of 66 affordable units along with five demonstrator homes to test the latest innovations and products to help support ageing and environmental sustainability in a real-world setting. All new homes will be integrated within the Future Homes development, the first wave of residential development at Helix, which was approved by Newcastle City Council's Planning Committee on Friday 28th August.

The second, larger component of the donation will provide core funding for a 20/25-bed "new model" residential care home. This ground-breaking project, for which Newcastle City Council will identify a site, will be a prototype which moves away from the traditional large-scale care home to a more domestic, clustered, communal setting. Its design and operation will incorporate key lessons learned from the COVID pandemic, including on infection control and operation of lockdowns and "support bubbles", helping to minimise negative effects on residents, particularly those living with dementia. The care home's construction will be led by the City Council who will also own and operate the facility.

The plans showcase the Council's strategy to provide better integrated services for elderly residents, working closely with NHS, University and voluntary and community sector partners. Providing better, community focused services that are holistic and built around independent living has greater benefits for the health and wellbeing of residents.

Both the independent living facilities and the care home will be built to enable best use of new technology including telehealth, telemedicine and remote monitoring using the "internet of things". As well as providing state-of-the-art facilities for residents, both types of accommodation will provide valuable data to help grow knowledge of how best to operate care facilities in a post-COVID environment, facilitating maximum collaboration between facilities and the UK National Innovation Centre for Ageing, Urban Observatory as well as other researchers and providers of care.

For Legal & General, funding these facilities forms a further component part of the company's "Let's Care for Britain" programme. This already includes a £20m, seven-year investment in research into future elderly care by Edinburgh University, which is already working on this in partnership with Newcastle University. This support has already "crowded in" an additional £20m of funding from other sources.

Nigel Wilson, Chief Executive of Legal & General, said:

“With an ageing population, elderly care was already a major issue for L&G and many of our customers, and COVID was a further tragic blow for many in the care sector – including in the North East. We have to find better ways to care for older people, and these prototypes will accelerate the process, demonstrate what can be done and what is viable, and complement the academic work we already sponsor. Doing this here, alongside brilliant partners, cements Newcastle’s position as a national leader in care.”

Nick Forbes, Leader of Newcastle City Council, said;

“I am thrilled to announce this partnership with L&G, which builds on our previous city-wide agreement and provides a welcome investment in critical adult social care services.

“The population in Newcastle is growing older and many of our residents live with complex needs that require different levels of support. I am passionate about ensuring we have the right level of care, available at the right time and in the right place that helps all our residents live long, happy and healthy lives.

“Newcastle is a very forward thinking, modern city that is digital by design. Our modern approach to living, working and doing business in our city should be reflected in all aspects of Newcastle life and benefit all our residents and communities.

“The pandemic has shown how vital good quality adult social care services are and how important our approach to partnership working is. We have an opportunity to move away from large scale facilities to smaller, community based services that provide a sense of independent home living, are Dementia friendly and improve everyone’s quality of life.

“Newcastle can be a global leader in our thinking for the future and homes and services like this showcase that belief.”

Charlotte Carpenter, Executive Director of Growth and Business Development at Karbon Homes, said:

“We are excited about the huge potential of the new homes we are building with the Future Homes Alliance.

“I want to thank L&G for their very generous contribution to this important project. Working closely with our partners, we aim to set new standards in quality and innovation, to provide the best possible living environment.

“We will be experimenting with new technologies and products to enhance the lives of older residents in particular, and really push the boundaries on what can be achieved around environmental sustainability.”

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Notes to editors -**Legal & General**

Established in 1836, Legal & General is one of the UK's leading financial services groups and a major global investor, with international businesses in the US, Europe, Middle East and Asia. With over £1.2 trillion in total assets under management (as of 30 June 2020), we are the UK's largest investment manager for corporate pension schemes and a UK market leader in pension risk transfer, life insurance, workplace pensions and retirement income.

Newcastle City Council

Newcastle City Council is the Labour run authority based in the North East of England that represents the 26 wards that make up Newcastle-upon-Tyne. Newcastle is home to many varied and diverse communities and has a global reputation as a modern city with fantastic culture, beautiful quayside and historic city centre.

Being Well – Making sure people receive the right care, at the right time and in the right place, that will help them live long, happy and healthy lives.

Karbon Homes

Karbon Homes builds, manages and looks after affordable homes for people across the North. The aim is to give all customers the strong foundations they need to get on with life. Since our formation in 2017, Karbon has focused on delivering our three strategic aims - to provide as many good quality homes as we can, to deliver excellent service to our customers, and to shape strong, sustainable places for our communities. Our footprint covers the North East of England and Yorkshire, with almost 30,000 homes across diverse communities, all facing different opportunities and challenges.

Some customers just need an affordable home, or a way onto the property ladder. Others might need more – financial advice, community services, sheltered accommodation or training that can lead to a new job. Whatever people need to feel more secure, confident and happy with their lives, Karbon staff work hard to provide it. Karbon believes that by combining a sound business head with a strong social heart and staying true to our values, we can build strong foundations for even more people.