

Harry's Pledge – a commitment to carers

The social housing sector is proud to care. From providing homes with specialist care and support, to offering care services to people who want to live independently at home, we are committed to caring for our communities.

Now, more than ever, the coronavirus crisis has highlighted the vital work that carers do. It has also shown that, as a society, we should value carers more – both those paid and unpaid. Clapping weekly to celebrate their work is a fantastic show of solidarity and thanks, but it must be followed by changes in public policy.

That is why we've come together as housing association staff, and proud CIH, National Housing Federation and PlaceShaper members, with the support of Carers UK, Inside Housing and our founding partner Harry's Pals, to make a renewed commitment to carers called Harry's pledge.

Harry's Pledge focuses on four areas where we can support those who need care and those who provide it. We define a carer as someone who cares for someone with physical or mental health needs.

Show your commitment to carers by signing up to Harry's Pledge:

1. As employers:

- We will do all we can to support people with caring responsibilities to work for us by making our policies carer-friendly.
- We will be a carer friendly employer.
- We will ensure people can work flexibly to fit paid work around unpaid caring.
- We will provide platforms and support for carers to tell their stories, and to tell us what more they need from us as employers and housing providers.

2. In our workspaces:

We will make the offices and community spaces we offer as accessible as possible. For example, we will install "Changing Place" toilets in any new offices that are open to the public and look to retrofit existing spaces.

3. In the homes we build:

- We will build more fully accessible homes.
- We will routinely consider accessibility when developing new homes and within our existing stock.
- We will consider how more of the homes we build can be adapted for disabled people.

4. In training and career progression:

- We will work with partners to professionalise care further with clear qualifications and career paths.
- We will promote care as a valued career choice.
- We will lobby for changes in pay and rewards for carers.

Organisations that want to sign up for Harry's Pledge or find out more information can visit harrys-pledge.org.uk or follow @HarrysPledge on Twitter.