



# Care Campus

DUMFRIES & GALLOWAY

A NEW MODEL OF CARE

MAY 2018

[www.carecampus.co.uk](http://www.carecampus.co.uk)



Photograph: Beef Tub by Rodney Hutchinson

Cover Photograph: Carsethorn by Peter McDonald



## THE VISION

**Care Campus is a unique blend of ideas, ambitions and practical actions with the potential to transform the lives of older people, foster inter-generational engagement, and provide new approaches to housing, care and community empowerment.**

## CONTEXT

The ageing of our population presents many challenges, but also significant opportunities. It is widely known that the proportion of older people in society is increasing. We are living longer and deriving great benefit from extended years. The meaning of retirement is changing, older people have more choices about how they wish to live, and their potential to go on enriching our communities is widely recognised.

At the same time, later life for some people can be fraught with loneliness and a lack of purpose. Chronic illness, frailty and disability may diminish quality of life. Opportunities to maintain independence may be restricted by inappropriate housing, isolation or by limited resources.

We need to think differently about the challenges and the opportunities that result from an ageing society. At the same time, we need to consider the wellbeing, prospects, employment and health needs of younger people – not least in relation to education, training and housing.

Care Campus grew out of discussions at the Crichton Campus in Dumfries, where academics started to ask if Dumfries and Galloway could become home to a new initiative to foster healthy ageing and intergenerational wellbeing. The idea quickly gained momentum and interest from across the community.

It began with proposals to develop new accommodation at the Crichton Campus that could serve as a prototype for others. It has now grown into a wider vision that can be implemented in many settings, in different forms and according to local circumstances.



## CARE CAMPUS - THE CONCEPT

Care Campus is not something limited to one location. It is an idea as well as a place.

We envisage a network of activities and initiatives, supporting and drawing from related activities across the whole of Dumfries and Galloway. In several places in the region new ideas about housing, care, later life, and intergenerational contact are already bubbling up led by local community groups, housing associations and service providers. Can these be harnessed to the bigger vision of Care Campus working together in partnership?

Older people can be found in all our towns, villages and dispersed communities. How can we enhance quality of life and intergenerational engagement in more structured ways in diverse local settings?

Can children's nurseries, primary schools and academies develop well designed approaches to working with people in nearby care homes or special housing for older people? Can community projects undertaken by schools and colleges build a more committed focus on intergenerational benefit? Are there opportunities for mutual learning and 'knowledge exchange' as well as creative, arts-based activities between older and younger people?

Likewise, there is much more that can be done to think imaginatively about housing options in our rural communities. Can the needs of older and younger people be combined and met in new ways, linked to other local assets – community groups, health and social care facilities? It might then be possible to connect these to the teaching and research programmes of the Universities and Colleges that are based in Dumfries and Galloway. It may be possible to facilitate respite and holiday exchanges between people living in different settings across the region and to provide accommodation for visitors coming from further afield to spend time with older relatives and friends.



## CARE CAMPUS – THE PLACE

This could be the flagship project or ‘hub’ for Care Campus ideas, reaching out to and drawing from the wider regional network.

The Crichton Campus is on the edge of the town of Dumfries in rural South West Scotland. It is home to several academic, non-profit and business organisations. A landscaped site, with listed buildings, beautiful trees and open spaces, it began life as a psychiatric hospital in the first half of the nineteenth century. It has a hotel, conference and entertainment facilities, a pool and spa, a bistro, café and a non-denominational church. It has become a place of learning, teaching and enterprise as well as somewhere for leisure and relaxation, and it is seen as a key asset to the local economy. It also has a children’s nursery, plans for an outdoor gym, walkways with interpretive signs and a host of activities associated with University and College life.

We imagine people accommodated on environmentally sensitive and sustainable lines in a community located on the existing Crichton estate, and benefitting from all its amenities. It could be a place providing for a full spectrum of needs – from completely independent ‘retirement’ living, through sheltered accommodation, to long-term and end-of-life care facilities. It could comprise of housing to the highest design standards, developed in consultation with those who live there. There is high ambition for the quality of the buildings, their disposition in the landscape and their ability to inspire those who live and work at Crichton. There is inspiration to be found from many examples of good design in housing and care facilities. The best of these could serve as a benchmark, which could be world class in conception and delivery.

At the Crichton, residents could be involved in many potential activities, including exercise, horticulture, arts and music. There will be access to well-equipped sheds, studios, allotment space, recreation and exercise facilities. It will have social spaces for music, entertainment, arts and learning events.



Some residents may want to get involved with academic courses and research taking place among the Universities and Colleges at the Crichton. There will be many opportunities for cross-generational activity through student volunteering, internships, project work, high-quality employment for motivated and committed staff, and the potential for co-housing arrangements across generations.

Discussions are underway about a preferred site, forms of tenure, the potential for investment and an appropriate business model that can make this achievable, affordable and sustainable.

## THE BENEFITS

An experiment on this scale has not been tried before. But we know from other initiatives that significant benefits can result. Care Campus is about the potential to improve quality of life, health and wellbeing, and to reduce isolation and loneliness. It may also be possible to reduce unwanted hospital admissions, to prolong independent living and create resilience. The lives of younger and older people can benefit from activities across the generations. Living well in old age can also help people face their own mortality and indeed to die well, when the time comes.

## WHERE NEXT?

With funding from the LEADER programme, and supporting organisations, and the involvement of the partner organisations based at the Crichton, work is now underway to test these ideas in more detail and to seek opportunities for development. Our team is keen to meet anyone who would like to contribute.

**To learn more or discuss your own ideas about Care Campus, please email [info@carecampus.co.uk](mailto:info@carecampus.co.uk)**



Photograph: Isle of Whithorn by Rodney Hutchinson



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