

# Homes of the future could save NHS millions per year

**SCOTLAND'S most innovative housing and care specialists showcased homes which could save the NHS millions per year at Europe's largest housing conference.**

Blackwood took its 'home of the future' to the Chartered Institute of Housing's (CIH) annual conference in Manchester where attendees were able to see first-hand the pioneering technology it utilises.

The Blackwood House boasts features such as rise and fall surfaces, electric sliding doors and integration with Blackwood's technologically advanced CleverCogs system to help disabled people to live as independently as possible.

Over 280,000 people across the UK end up in A&E due to falls each year, costing the NHS £1.5 billion while Scotland's housing associations spend £10m per year on adaptations.

Investing in the Blackwood House will help the public purse in a variety of ways such as reducing the number of falls customers suffer due to the design of the homes, while their accessible nature negates the need for expensive adaptations.

It's estimated that the UK will have an extra nine million over 65s by 2041 and the Blackwood House provides a modern and future proof way of tackling the need to provide extra housing.

The House also aids digital inclusion, with customers no longer feeling left cut off thanks to innovative technology to allow them to carry out payments and enquires online.

Simon Fitzpatrick, Development and Commercial Director at Blackwood, said: "We're very passionate about the way our Blackwood Houses help people to live their lives as independently as possible.

"We believe in creating neighbourhoods with the Blackwood House at the very heart of them which and it was brilliant to see so many visitors to the home at the conference getting behind our #ImIn movement.

"The Blackwood House provides a solution to the national housing crisis and can help save the NHS millions of pounds so we're incredibly proud and excited to be at the forefront of housing design."

The Blackwood team adopted an ingenious method of transporting its 'home of the future' to the annual conference – by building it across three shipping containers.

Visitors were encouraged to write their thoughts on Blackwood's 'graffiti wall' while 'Pepper' – an intelligent social robot – welcomed people at the front door before Blackwood staff talked them through the homes' main features.

CleverCogs, Blackwood's digitally enhanced care system, works through a touch screen home hub which allows customers to control a range of household functions as well as stay connected to friends and family and updated on their hobbies.

Simon added: "It was a logistical challenge to get a Blackwood House replica down to Manchester but the shipping containers worked so well and the team did an amazing job of getting it all set up and in place ahead of the conference starting.

"It was brilliant to share our passion for helping people live as independently as possible at Europe's largest housing conference and there was a buzz around our stand throughout each of the days."

Blackwood has an ambitious development programme over the next five years and every aspect of the house has been carefully considered to remove any obstacles or issues that can disrupt daily life. It features electric doors that slide open and shut at the touch of a tablet, taking away the hassle of manoeuvring around the home.

The property is 'smart', too, with technology playing a key role: lights, blinds, doors, entry systems and heating can all be controlled via Blackwood's bespoke digital care system, CleverCogs™. Much of this technology will be able to be controlled by voice.

The CIH Housing Conference welcomed 12,000 visitors over the three days with around 33,000 meetings taking place on the show floor.

Headquartered in state of the art, wheelchair friendly offices in Edinburgh, Blackwood works in 29 of Scotland's 32 local authorities, and embraces the challenge of innovating housing and care at a time when funding is increasingly limited.