

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Saturday 3 October 2009

Contact: Stephen Burke 07714 334510

MAKING CARE THE BIG ELECTION ISSUE

National charity Counsel and Care today (3 October 2009) welcomes the Conservative Party to the debate on how care for older people is funded, 'making care the big election issue'. The charity calls for political consensus on radical reform to care financing to help older people and their families get the care they need wherever they live.

Counsel and Care chief executive, Stephen Burke, said: "With our ageing population and increasing demands for better care, the next government can't duck the question of how we pay for care. It will cost more and it is crucial that funding care is a big election issue.

"We therefore welcome the Conservative Party joining the debate, following the government's green paper on paying for care. Now we need political consensus to ensure a long-lasting settlement to meet the needs of this and future generations.

"Any solution has to help older people fund their care wherever they live – in their own home or in a care home. More and more older people want to stay living in their own home with proper support. Local authorities already should do more to help older people avoid selling their home to pay for residential care.

“It has to be questioned whether a voluntary insurance scheme will get sufficient support to properly fund the cost of care homes. It may also create a perverse incentive to move into residential care.

“Counsel and Care has supported the comprehensive scheme in the green paper – where everyone gets the care they need wherever they live in return for a one-off payment. This could be made via a care duty on people’s estates.”

-ENDS-

NOTES TO EDITORS

1. Counsel and Care is a national charity working with older people, their families and carers to get the best care and support. Advice on issues affecting older people can be obtained by calling 0845 300 7585 or emailing advice@counselandcare.org.uk.
2. Counsel and Care’s Advice Service opening hours are 10am-4pm Monday-Friday except Wednesday afternoons.
3. More information about Counsel and Care can be obtained from www.counselandcare.org.uk.