

SHELTERED HOUSING CONSULTATION GROUP SPECIAL MEETING

Tuesday 17 May 2005

NOTES

Present: -

Peter Taunton	Interim Head of Housing	Mrs T Burrow	Toronto House
Tony Bodgin	ECC	Mrs J Browning	Flowerpot
Steve Deakin	ECC	Mrs B Brown	Flowerpot
Mr J Menday	Warden	Mr F Griffiths	Abbeville Close
Mrs JE Welham	Aldens Road	Miss J Martins	Nelson Close
Mrs Kirby	Aldens Road	Mrs G Tyrrell	Globefield
Mrs V Parr	Southlands	Mrs V Phelps	Teazle Court
Mrs Chisholm	Southlands	Mrs B Clench	Faraday House
Mrs S Banwell		Mrs S Bath	Nelson Close
		Mrs B Staddon	Bodley Close
		Mrs Winham	York House
Mr P Tait	Grandisson Ct	Mrs S McCleod	York House
Mrs S Lancaster	Magdalen Gdns		
Mr L Pearson	Rennes House		

Apologies: -

Mr W Bell, Yvonne Trude Senior Warden, Mrs P Stoneman Grandisson Ct., Mr K Murray Grandisson Ct, Mrs J Smith Rennes House.

Introduction

The meeting opened with a general introduction from Tony Bodgin who welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked them for attending.

Supporting People Standards

TB went on to discuss the Supporting People Standards, which had been distributed to the group at the last meeting and with the last minutes. TB explained that meeting the Supporting People Standards for all our Sheltered Housing schemes would cost £10.6m. The Council cannot afford the amount of money needed to meet the standard. The problem is that some properties will not physically meet these standards due to their design and internal layout. TB then introduced the new Interim Head of Housing, Peter Taunton to the group.

Peter Taunton began by reassuring everyone that no one would have to leave their home or be forced to have work carried out if they chose not to. A draft report has been produced which has to be presented to Scrutiny Committee before we can act on the findings. This group will need to be involved in discussions about the decisions that need to be made with regard to the standard of existing sheltered accommodation and what is laid down in the Supporting People Standards.

The sites where officers have identified the greatest potential for meeting the Supporting People Standards are: -

Amersham Court, Malvern Gardens, Payne Court, Russett House, King William Street, Southlands, Flowerpot Lane, Faraday House, Nelson Close, Rennes House and Bodley Close.

A provisional programme has been developed to meet the standards. Lifts will be installed, where needed, to improve access to these dwellings. Stairlifts are fine for individual use but are not suitable for scheme use.

Residents living in schemes that have been identified as unable to meet the standards will be reassured that no one will lose their home and will still benefit from the warden service.

Where improvements need to be made and can be made, tenants will be consulted before this work is carried out. Some tenants may not want the upheaval involved in bringing the accommodation up to the required standard and this was accepted.

The group as a top priority identified walk in showers because accessing the bath can be a big issue for most people in sheltered accommodation.

The Needs Assessment questionnaire, which was distributed to all sheltered tenants, was necessary for planning the service. The financial questions not only help in planning the service but also provide information like whether people are claiming the benefits they are entitled to, the numbers who will be requiring the warden service and if the warden service is going to those who need it.

The accessibility and layout of some of our sheltered dwellings makes them difficult to let. Added to this it is not physically possible to put the Supporting People standards in place in many of these difficult to let dwellings.

We will also need to discuss what happens when no one over 60 wants a particular flat. This leads to long times when the property is empty (void) and loss of revenue.

Various ideas and suggestions have been put forward in an attempt to address the long void periods, which affect some of our sheltered accommodation. One suggestion was to offer them to people over 50, another was to offer them on a shared ownership basis, but safeguards would need to be put in place governing the transfer of the shares.

The draft proposals are as follows: -

- Offer the dwelling to over 60's – if no interest after predetermined period
- Offer to people over 50 on the waiting list for rent, if there is still no interest,
- Offer to people over 50 for shared ownership, if there is still no interest,
- Offer to people under 50 for shared ownership, if there is still no interest,
- Offer to younger people for rent.

The two main issues with moving younger people in are Anti-social behaviour and young children. This proposal could be the way forward but it will be necessary to manage the situation carefully and sensitively.

In schemes where it is necessary to mix different age groups it will be done in consultation with the residents. The intention is to prevent any trouble happening in the first place and not being in a position where we have to move residents away from trouble.

There may need to be further discussions about what will happen with regard to bedsits.

Next Meeting

Monday 13 June Buckerell Lodge Hotel 2.00 pm start.

Anyone requiring a taxi should, as usual, phone ZCARS on Exeter 422888.

On the agenda next time: -

- The Older Persons Strategy
- Improvement Programme
- If anyone has any issues they want raised at the next meeting please contact Steve Deakin on 265698, but make sure you allow enough time to organise a